

# JULIETTE RECAMIER



HER LIFE  
AND TIMES

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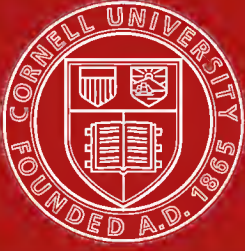
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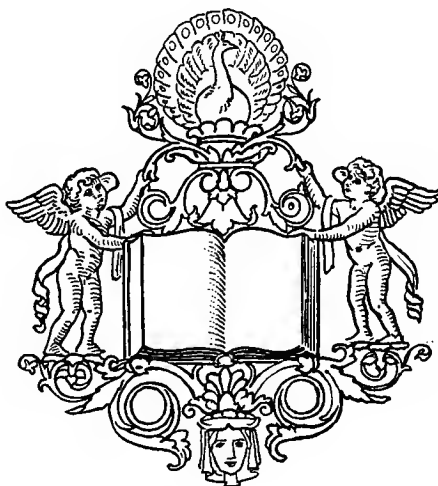
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*TO MY SISTER*  
*MRS. J. HARRY SELŽ*



# JULIETTE RÉCAMIER

by  
*Delia Austrian*



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JULIETTE RECAMIER

# The Life of



## Chapter I

### THE QUEEN OF FOUR REIGNS

**I** WAS ON A LOVELY SEPTEMBER DAY, THE SIXTH FLOREAL YEAR of Liberty, and the 24th of April 1793, when a slender girl of fifteen came down a long flight of stairs from the Hôtel de Ville. A slight arm was locked in that of her tall blond husband.

You knew that she was a bride because of the white bonnet she wore, finished off by a long veil, and by the soft white dress. Brilliant chestnut curls showed under the bonnet's frill.

Her girlish oval face wore an earnest expression with but a mere suggestion of a smile. She held her husband's arm tighter as strange noises came to her ears from the neighboring streets.

# Juliette Récamier



The bridegroom looked admiringly into that sweet child-like countenance whose serious expression seemed rather unnatural. But even her earnestness could not conceal her beauty or detract from the svelte and graceful figure that was adorned so simply by the wedding finery.

In this girlish and undeveloped figure he saw promise of a stately and well poised carriage, in the face he saw a rarely handsome woman.

Her mild eyes were shaded by long silky lashes. The color of her cheeks was accentuated by her warm lips, which Diderot said was "like a jar of milk on which one tosses rose leaves," but at this time her sensitive nostrils quivered with fear.

Her youth caused her husband, who was years older, to look like a father rather than as a wedded mate. Neither of them

was really conscious of the fact that they had just left the Hotel de Ville, where they had been proclaimed man and wife by an official wearing the red bonnet, or that they had signed the register.

For this young, half-frightened girl was none other than Juliette Bernard, the only daughter of M. Bernard, a notary, who came from Lyons and who was an ancient receiver of finance in Paris.

The husband was Monsieur Jacques Rose Recamier, a prominent French banker. She was more conscious of his strength than of her own physical charms as she looked up into his blue eyes and tightly held his sturdy arm. They were followed and attended by a single couple, Juliette's parents.

The young girl trembled from head to toe as she heard the coarse laughter and cries "Long live Barras."

These words were from the lips of a mob of dirty-looking men and women who came from a narrow street into the wide boulevard. They gathered closely about a man who sat in a chair that was supported by four of his followers. He wore a wreath of oak leaves and his face was lighted by a cynical smile that showed plainly how conscious he was of his power. In passing, his heavy baggy eyes fixed themselves on the pretty trembling girl who drew closer to her husband.

The marriage ceremony was completed by a small reception to which Juliette's parents and a few of their intimate friends were bidden. This attractive, innocent girl was more absorbed in youthful pastimes than in creating a salon, or even in pleasing her husband.

Such was the wedding day of Juliette Recamier, a girl of fifteen who was born and passed her early years

at Lyons in the company of her parents and of old Simonard, a life-long friend of the family. She received her training for a later life in her mother's salon.

Her father, a tall and handsome figure, also had a pleasing personality, that attracted financiers to their homes both in Lyons and later in Paris.

But her best training was gained at Villefranche, where she spent her childhood days in a convent, watched over by an aunt, her mother's sister, who was celebrated for her charming manner and the careful supervision she gave her little niece.

There was a romantic incident in her early days worth mentioning. It was while living in this convent that this little girl of seven or eight met a little boy by the name of Humboldt, who at this time was not conscious of the fact that some day he was to become a great naturalist and philosopher, and that the little girl he then loved was to captivate the heart of many another famous man.

They only knew they liked each other in their innocent and charming way.

Although it was only a childish fancy for both, Juliette often said to her husband and to others that Humboldt was her first real lover.

Camille Jordan, a scholar of his day, was one of her most welcome guests, first at Lyons and later in Paris. He was noticeable for his easy, amiable manner as well as for his democratic and original mind.

Equally friendly was Lemontey, who was celebrated for his learning—and his willingness to display it.

One of the most welcome of these visitors was Jacques Recamier who was called by his friends in Lyons, *un joli*

*garçon* (a pretty man). He was admired by Juliette and her family because he was gay and generous and always knew the right way of doing things. He treated the pretty Juliette as a child, amazed her with wonderful stories, much as he would have done had she been his daughter. He brought her candies and dolls.

Therefore this girl of fifteen was not surprised when he asked her hand in marriage. Speaking of this marriage her aunt, Mme. Lenormant said: "The affections which make real happiness and dignity in woman, were lacking. She was neither wife nor mother and her heart was a desert."

This civil marriage did not culminate in any religious service offered at the church or at Juliette's home. For in these stormy days when Barras' eyes and his groups were watching for those who were opposed to their régime, it was considered wise to carry on all celebrations quietly.

Then, as later, her husband treated her as a daughter. His chief motive in marrying her seemed to be to give her his increased affection and his fortune, in case the hungry mob should select him as one of the number to be slaughtered.

The stormy days in which she was married, soon took a turn for the better, after the ninth thermidor, which brought the execution of Robespierre, Henroit, Couthon and Saint Just.

Speaking of those days Henry Turquan in his life of Madame Recamier said: "A short time after the triumph of the Thermidorians, her husband's fortune crowned his efforts and the bank of Recamier became the strength of the capital."



Mme. Recamier was one of the handsomest women of her day. She had as rivals la citoyenne Tallien, the mistress of Barras and also known as a great beauty.

There was also the marquise of Fontenat as well as Mme. Caburru, and later the Princesse de Chimay, mentioned for her beauty and graceful dancing, as well as was the lightfooted Mme. Hamelin. All these women were beautiful figures on the ball-room floor, and Mme. Recamier watched them with great interest.

Meanwhile in the year 1794 and during the year of 1795 which saw the powers of the convention expire, Mme. Recamier only visited the salons of some of the bankers, and was seen only at public balls. One saw her frequently in an open carriage on the boulevards, attracting great crowds by her sweet and charming expression.

Madame Recamier was one of the fashionable women who enjoyed amusing themselves. When she had once become a queen in the Chaussée d'Antin, this woman of elegance and of fashion appeared at the home of Tourten, Perregaux and Sequin and at many other splendid homes.

La Harpe was a friend of the family even in Lyons, and she followed his lectures given at the Lycée with much interest.

There was always a seat kept close to his, and it was vacant until her arrival. Juliette Recamier was even then so well known for her beauty and charm that she greatly helped in making La Harpe's lectures popular.

This man La Harpe was a gallant; he had success

as well as pretension and he was as unrestrained as a child. He had a splendid head and an amiable expression, but his figure was small and without elegance.

He had courage, audacity, an air of decision and authority and he often sacrificed himself to these traits.

His expression was impertinent, especially when he was well-powdered and dressed in black velvet with a gold vest and cuffs made of filet of lace. A man of gallantry and of charming spirit.

He exercised his authority in powerful action and charm. The play of Warwick was his first triumph in 1763 when he was but twenty-six years of age. La Harpe was sensitive to harsh criticism and he tried to appear as a restorer of taste. He succeeded as a journalist and largely on account of his defiant attitude.

When his friends told him that he was too theatrical, he answered: "I cannot help that. It is stronger than I am."

Juliette Recamier played the harp exquisitely and had a pleasing voice, and much of her time and attention was given to music. She was often seen at Feydau's concerts where the very best music was rendered. She also attended the open air fêtes that were given at Vauxhall and at the Tivoli.

Wherever she went she was recognized, because of her simple and elegant dressing. She usually wore white with soft fichus folded about her neck in a certain fashion, tied with a blue ribbon. At times the crowds applauded her and made other signs of their approval of her beauty and charm, and she with

the confidence of a queen bowed in recognition of their generous admiration.

During the days of Barras, who was one of the Directory and head of the Republic, the balls were many and occasionally the lovely Juliette was seen at them in the company of Mme. Tallien and Mme. Beauharnais, the latter a beauty well known for her rich olive complexion and brilliant eyes.

Arsène Houssaye, writing of these days, says:

"I shall never forget my surprise when leaving the apartments of Barras and reaching the foot of the stairway, at having encountered three women noticeable for their extreme beauty. Madame Tallien, Madame Recamier and Madame Beauharnais, who habitually ornamented the salons of the Directory—a new kind of surprise for me.

"It was at one of these fêtes that Madame Recamier first met Mme. Tallien, the mistress of Barras."

It was about this time she also made the acquaintance of Madame de Stael, which acquaintance soon budded and developed into a lasting friendship.

Their meeting came about through Monsieur Recamier and Juliette calling on Monsieur Necker, as possible purchasers, the father of Madame de Stael, at number seven Rue du Mont Blanc, which house his daughter owned and wished to sell.

The brilliant de Stael, fascinating writer, was captivated by Juliette Recamier's naïve charm and beauty and although eleven years older she had a forceful influence on Juliette from the very first. This fact is transcribed in a letter written by Benjamin Constant about Madame Recamier: "One

day, and this day was an epoch in my life, M. Recamier and his wife went to Clichy, with a woman whose name I cannot remember, and he left me alone with this lady to join some friends in the park. She wore a morning dress and a straw hat trimmed with flowers and I took her for a stranger.

"I was taken by the beauty of her eyes and her glance. I could not make up my mind where I had seen her before, though I felt certain we were not absolute strangers." After a few formal words, spoken in a vivacious and penetrating manner, de Stael's father, M. Necker, left them alone together.

"At these words I knew it was no other than Mme. de Stael. I did not hear anything else that was said; I blushed my embarrassment and my consciousness was great. I had read her letters on Rousseau and I was delighted with them.

"She frightened and attracted me at one and the same time. I felt in her a person perfectly natural, but having a great nature. She fixed her curious eyes on me, full of kindness, and paid me compliments about my beauty which seemed exaggerated and too direct. She expressed a desire to see me often when she returned to Paris, for she was leaving for Coppet.

"This was only an apparition in my life but it was strong. I no longer thought of her, though I felt the reaction of her strong and ardent nature."

By this time Jacques Recamier had become one of the strongest bankers in Paris and he felt that his wife's beauty was worthy of a suitable setting. After buying the home of Mme. de Stael it was remodeled completely.

The best architects and interior decorators were called in to help make it over. The velvet carpets were soft enough to deaden all sounds. The vestibules were brightened with foliage and flowers, and were trimmed with marble.

The bedrooms were noted for their long mirrors and rich draperies, that harmonized with the different colored satin upholstered furniture. The two salons were large; the doors and walls were finished with massive walnut in keeping with the heavy carpets and rich furniture and all the rooms were lighted with bronze lamps.

The banker encouraged his young wife to entertain men and women of influence of different social ranks and of various political parties.

No sooner were the doors of her salon thrown open than the rooms were crowded with financiers, army men, politicians, savants and writers. It was said that great men who often clashed outside because of their different political views brushed these differences aside in Juliette's salon and were very friendly toward each other.

During Le Directoire few salons were open, and this one, presided over by a young woman, noticeable for her rare beauty and girlish manner, soon became the most popular place in Paris. M. de la Harpe, a friend of her mother's, often was a visitor there. It was Voltaire who said of la Harpe: "He always keeps things boiling without cooking anything."

Le Montey, who was known to have loved to enter upon long literary discussions, was another of the men who came to visit Juliette at this time. The

Royalists were welcomed there on equal terms with the men and women who stood for the Republican Party.

Kotzebue in his souvenirs of Paris, tells the following story: "One day a great ball was given at the home of Madame Recamier, when the hostess was taken ill suddenly. All at once the doors of her bedroom were thrown open to give the guests an opportunity to look in the room.

"To get a better view, many stood on the footstools and chairs. The scramble was so great that finally M. Recamier rushed into the salon, and put napkins and plates on the furniture to protect them from damage."

At the début of the Consulat Juliette Recamier was fêted and applauded, as one of the youngest queens of the day. She gave tone to the social world in which she moved. Even before, after General Bonaparte's return from Egypt, her salon was thrown open to the greatest officers and statesmen in France.

She had made already the friendship of the Montmorencies that continued throughout her life. Mathieu Montmorency, the scholarly and more serious minded of the two, had made himself known in the United States of America. He was thrilled by the French wars like many French soldiers and he wanted to fight for Liberty in America.

Mathieu was married to a French girl who had borne him a daughter, but conjugal responsibilities were soon forgotten, first in war days and later in a long flirtation he had with Madame de Stael. Adrien, the younger Montmorency, also admired this clever

woman but he was known to "have an elastic heart." But the Montmorencies' admiration for Madame de Stael was totally eclipsed by the devotion of both men to Juliette Recamier. Both came frequently to her salon and Mathieu became her lifelong friend and counselor.

The women who visited her salon admired her as much as did the men. Mme. Bacciochi, Madame Murat, the sisters of Napoleon, courted her favor and often invited Juliette to their opera box and to the theatre. Radiant as Josephine Beauharnais was herself, she felt that she had a worthy rival in Madame Recamier. Her son Eugene loved to flirt with the new queen and went so far one evening, as to take a ring from Juliette and beg to be allowed to keep it as a worthy memento of their friendship, but she insisted on his returning the bauble.

At this time she appeared brilliant, and we see her followed and courted by Lucien, brother to Napoleon Bonaparte. Lucien was the first important person in the history of the times who had loved her. Caroline Bonaparte (Madame Murat) was never an intimate friend of Juliette's but there existed between these women a sort of comradeship, provoked by a similarity in their beauty, and because of their youth.

Monsieur Recamier favored this friendship and encouraged them to exchange visits. A financier of influence, he ever welcomed the friendships Juliette made, so long as they promoted his business interests.

One day, while Juliette was going to a luncheon, given to Madame Baciocchi, Madame de Stael and others, a messenger announced that her father had

been arrested and locked up in the temple. She was told that as administrator of letters he was accused of having allowed the correspondence of Royalist pamphlets to be published.

Naturally the luncheon was broken up and Madame Recamier begged permission to hasten to Fouché to see if he would revoke the sentence pronounced against her father.

Caroline Bonaparte took her to the Comédie Française where she found her sister Pauline all absorbed in the actor Lafen, who was playing a leading rôle in one of the successes of the day.

Fouché had refused to see M. Bernard's daughter. He said that the arrest had been caused by the decision of the consul and could only be revoked by him. It was then that she hurried to the theatre and begged the sisters to influence Napoleon to change the order.

Caroline invited the tortured Juliette to their box, where Pauline was found with her attention focused on the play. Juliette pleaded with Caroline, asked if one or both of them would help her. Alas, no. Pauline was too busy conveying her impressions of the acting to her sister, to be bothered with any outside matter.

In the meantime a person kept himself modestly in a far corner of the box, and the evident chagrin of this young woman awakened the pity and kindness of this silent observer.

This man, General Bernadotte, offered graciously to accompany Juliette to the First Consul. Impressed by his kindness Juliette accepted his offer with no hesitation. Excited by her beauty he became elo-



quent and showed that he was anxious to be of service to her. Her beauty and persuasive power and Bernadotte's eloquence gained the day and Monsieur Bernard was allowed to leave the temple the next day, though later on he was dismissed from his position.

After they left Napoleon's rooms, Juliette thanked Bernadotte warmly. This was the beginning of a long and true friendship. The love he showed for her was evinced by the many letters he wrote to her. But this cruel incident changed Juliette's feelings toward the entire Royalist party.








## Chapter II

### HER EARLY LOVES

BOUT this time Lucien Bonaparte aspired to become Juliette Recamier's lover. Though he was married already his wife was delicate, and went little in society. This combination of circumstances gave Lucien freedom to flirt with all the handsome women he met.

He considered his intimacies with well known women to be important in the assistance of furthering his political importance and career. According to the historians of the day he was a handsome man but rather effeminate looking.

He had a well shaped head, and well-moulded features. Though much taller than his brother Napoleon, his physique was poor and he had a spinal irregularity that caused him to stoop slightly. His hands were unusually large as were his feet and he gesticulated a great deal while talking. With women he made every effort to be at his best and when he grew excited he became somewhat feline.

Lucien was devoted to Madame Recamier, so much so in fact that he was ever ready to dance attendance on her slightest whim. She is said to have dined with him several times at the more fashionable restaurants in Paris, and even welcomed him as she did many other famous men, to a spirit of social éclat and coquetry. At this time Lucien was but twenty-five years of age, and was Secretary of the Interior.

A short time afterwards, his wife died, and Lucien ceased his frequent visits to Madame Recamier for a time, but he wrote her many ardent letters which she regarded lightly, only later to realize how genuine his expressions of sentiment were.

While in Venice he wrote her more ardent epistles under the title, "First letters from Romeo to Juliet."

One of these read: "Romeo writes to you, Juliet. If you refuse to read my letter you will be more cruel than our people whose quarrels have just been appeased.

"Without doubt these dreadful quarrels will never come again. A few days ago I only knew you by reputation; I had seen you a few times at church and at fêtes. I knew that you were the most beautiful woman—a thousand lips had sung your praises; but the friends who complimented were weak in praise indeed. Why has this time of peace delivered me to your Empire?

"Remember that day when I was introduced to you? We celebrated our country's reconciliation at a great banquet. I had just come from the senate where troubles about the Republic had produced a lively impression on me. My mind was filled with deep thoughts. I arrived, quite sad and lost in dreams in those Bellemare Gardens, where we were expected. Merriment is always there and it dissipated my grief. I gave myself up to that rest for which skillfulness and calculation are necessary to conquer it.

"How good was this rest in contrast to human life, where everything is battle, attack and pursuit.

"You came then—and they all followed and surrounded you. 'How beautiful she is!' was the general outcry.

"The room where I stood was soon empty. I hardly could keep back with my companion at play. I refused to follow him, to fly near you. I seemed to be afraid of my Fate and to be willing to make my liberty of heart last a few moments longer.

"Chance or love brought me near you. I heard your voice, I was your slave. I could not admire your features enough, your accent, your silence, your movements, and your expression, which is still embellished by indifference, for you know how to make your indifference attractive.

"Crowds of people in the evening filled the Gardens. Intruders, who were everywhere, came to me. This time I had no patience nor politeness for them—they kept me away from you.

"When you appeared all eyes were on you. The men admired you and the women sought in you a subject of consolation. On the banks of a lake I observed your way of walking which is as simple as is your dress. In every movement and in every fold of your gown, flowers seemed to grow. I wanted to shake off the trouble that had taken hold of me. I found out that it was love and I wished to master it.

"I was taken away and left the Gardens of Bellemare at the same time you did. I saw you again since love smiled on me. One day sitting on the bank of a river quiet and dreaming, you played with a rose. I thought I heard a sigh. Vain illusion. As I saw my error I knew that indifference was seated

between us. Passion overcame me and expressed itself in my speech, but yours bore only a cruel joke.

"My complaints accompanied my sighs. You doubted Romeo, you spoke of his art of pretending feelings which he has not. Oh, Juliette, life without love is a long, long sleep. The most beautiful woman should have feelings.

"Happy must be the mortal who becomes the friend of your heart. Without doubt Romeo is not the one whom love has chosen for you, since he could not inspire you with esteem, since you cannot accuse him of hypocrisy. Without doubt he will be a victim of your indifference.

"Juliette—Romeo gives himself up to his Fate, but do not despise him nor think him false. Answer his love with pity and by believing in him. I wish to see you every day as though there were not enough pain already in my heart.

"I can see you alone but seldom, and these Venetians who surround you with their gallantry are unsupportable to me. Can anyone speak to Juliette, as to another woman? I wished to write to you. You will know me, you will believe in me. My soul is restless, it is parched with desire. If my love has not touched yours, if Romeo is in your eyes but an ordinary man, I beg you by all the ties which you imposed through kindness, do not smile, do not speak.

"Tell me to go away, and if I cannot accomplish this hard order remember that at least Romeo will love you always; that no one has ruled over him as has Juliette and that he cannot give up living for her—living in remembrance. Romeo."



But it did not take a Lucien Bonaparte to make Juliette Recamier's beauty famous both in Paris and in London. After the peace of Amiens the French flocked to London and the English to Paris.

Madame Recamier was one of the many who paid a long visit to England. While in London the papers gave a minute account of her social triumphs in the home of leading society women, at the theatres and at the opera. She could not walk through Kensington Gardens without attracting great crowds and having the fact recorded in all the papers.

The beautiful duchess of Devonshire entertained her royally and was pleased with her beauty and charming personality.

Sainte Beuve, speaking of Juliette in his *Causerie du Lundi*, says: "At the début of the Consulate one found her most brilliantly fêted; applauded by everyone for her elegance, for her knack of giving tone to the world, and for inventing by her subtle art those things that stand for supreme beauty.

"Glancing back at her, though we do not wish to make of her a goddess, we can only think of her beauty, tender and nurtured with a delicacy which marked her individual charm."

In the life of Madame Recamier we notice two distinct epochs; her days of youth with her triumph and her beauty, her long day of sunshine lasting well into the evening. Later, in the twilight of her life, after the sun had begun to set, I hesitate to speak. I cannot speak of her old age.

In these two epochs so full of color that they were one at the foundation, though they seemed to be different.

In both periods she showed traits that were essentially the same, and to show how strong she remained in this upheaval, she always remained pure.

She always guarded her desire of conquest, and her gracious personality, her coquetry was pure, almost angelic.

Le Montey was another of her guests who was always epigrammatic and found great pleasure in going to Juliette's salon where he entered into long discussions on many subjects. A friend of the family from the time Juliette was in Lyons, he looked upon her as a loyal friend, ever ready to do him a favor as she was ready to serve so many of her friends.

The most persistent of these suitors was Benjamin Constant—the Inconstant. He was a mobile, changeable soul, but possessed a sort of sincerity which disarmed the doubts that many people held toward him.

"There are two personalities," he said, "in me, and one is after the other."

Constant mocked himself until it became second nature.

Madame de Stael had great influence in his political writings and did much to have him turn against Napoleon. He was named consul of state and played a part in framing *L'act Additional*. This brilliant young writer was dominated by Germaine's ideas of politics and social life and he grew to love her, even going so far as to ask for her heart and hand.

Germaine, however, held him off, because at this time she was much interested in Prosper de Barante, who was then prefect of Leman. Madame de Stael was so taken with Barante's cleverness that she

said: "No man of his age is so clever and so talented." Barante courted de Stael while Constant looked on and bided his time. Later on de Stael looked with favor on Constant's suit, but by this time the fickle Benjamin was head over heels in love with Juliette Recamier.

He wrote her some thirty or more passionate letters in which he poured out his soul no less ardently than Lucien Bonaparte had done.

Constant had a wonderful style both in speaking and in writing; he was celebrated for his clearness and had a charm that is rarely found in men of letters. It is said that he spoke abruptly like Voltaire and had not the sonorous rhetoric of Rousseau. His language was somber and rich, harmonious and simple without being sentimental.

His pronunciation was different from the usual conversationalist and was hard to follow, but once into his subject he spoke with great fluency. His face showed a peculiar combination of French vivacity and English stiffness. He had a great weakness for gambling, and was far from being a saint, but it is said that there was a raillery in his humor and wickedness that made him a delightful companion.

When not gambling he was absorbed in religion, especially religious liberty and philosophy, and was ever ready to give his time and money to anybody that wanted or needed them.

Speaking of religion he says: "Let us leave religion to itself; always progressive and proportional, it will advance with ideas and it will become purer with morality. God will beautify at each epoch that

which is best. Let us always ask for religious liberty in every speech, surround religion with an invincible force and guarantee its perfection."

This thin and pale, blonde man gave much time and thought to serious observations. Just as he had gone to Madame de Stael for intellectual inspiration in his early days he went to Juliette Recamier for spiritual consolation.

When he failed to receive it, he went to Madame Krüdener and prayed with her that Juliette would give him spiritual sympathy. She was always willing to give him that, as she had given it to many others, but she refused to give him love.

Constant was able to flatter her vanity as he had that of many another young person, but further than that he could not go. He poured out his love to her in letter after letter. In one he wrote: "I love you no less than the time you found me weeping at your feet. I suffer so much with the least sign of indifference, and they are many.

"I am restless every moment of my life. I hold but one thought. You hold my being in one hand, as God does his creatures. A glance, a word, a gesture would change my very existence, and yet I submit myself to everything, and I do not complain. I suffer when you show your indifference at seeing me, because I cannot live without seeing you.

"And I often suffer and sacrifice much to win a smile from you. Oh, I would give my life for an hour of real joy with you. For this prize I would pierce my heart with my sword and spill my blood for you.

"But this is not to be wondered at, since you are

an angel from heaven. Nature could not have created a being more beautiful, more attractive, more enchanting in every glance, in every word than are you.

"Was there ever a woman who had so many charms, a mind so fine, a manner so naïve and piquant, such worthy instincts for everything that is noble and pure?

"You dominate over everything you touch. You are a model of grace and delicacy and of reason which astonishes by its justice and which captivates by its goodness which sweetens it.

"Why does this goodness not reach me and me alone? I have never loved as I love you. I have told you tonight that if you must torture me you must console me by telling me of some sacrifice I may make for you. Farewell. You will excuse me for having written to you. I have hesitated before sending this letter for fear of annoying you. Benjamin Constant."

Another of his ardent letters is as follows:

"My heart goes out to you. I must tell you how much I love you. My feeling is qualified by many characteristics which it once lacked. I find in you a thousand new charms; your mind is the only one which is suited to mine. Your happiness is so genuine, your soul is so pure and noble; every word from you indicates delicacy in showing goodness.

"I love you in everything that is beautiful and adorable on this earth. Oh, let me love you. I shall feel better for so doing. I shall respect myself the more. I am thankful to feel with so much strength all you are and all you are worth. My love is my only thought. It becomes almost a happiness be-

cause it is so sweet to admire and to love you. I cannot help telling you although my poor letters remain unanswered. But I love you as I love God to whom we pray and whose good influence we feel is in His heart in spite of His silence.

"Do not forget that you gave me permission to see you at two o'clock. You are Heaven, you are God to and for me.

"When Heaven closes itself, when God pushes me aside I feel that hell is about me. Everything that is good and sweet in me is killed when you draw back from me. Take me in pity and save me. You can do it, and you are the only one who can do it.

"I shall not trouble your life; I shall not go any further than you wish me to. I will retire humbly as soon as I feel that I am annoying you. But a quarter of an hour tête à tête with you, a word and an assurance of kindness is water in the desert. I often suffer and sacrifice much to win a smile from you.

"Good-bye and pardon my writing to you. I have commenced twenty letters during ten days and the idea that they had little meaning for you kept me from sending them.

"How much I love you; how much you mean to me; how much I adore you and your smile makes me joyous. What happiness could be mine with your friendship. Good-bye, Juliette. Allow me to speak your name for the last time. I have suffered much but I hope that I never did you any harm. God is witness to the truth of this. Forget all that you wish to forget. I have been sincere, devoted and I have never had any feeling of egotism in my love. As ever, Benjamin Constant."

One of the writers of her day speaking of Madame Recamier, without using her name, wrote: "Eve is the extreme moment of innocence, when people play with danger." This moment of indecision which did not last with Eve, began in the youth of Juliette Recamier, but it was always continued, and was dominated by a feeling stronger because of some secret virtue.

This young woman was imprudent, confident and curious as a child or a school-girl would be. She went to peril with security, with charity, smiling like those Christian kings of ancient days who healed the sick during Holy week.

She never doubted her power or her virtue.

She liked to wound hearts that she might be able to heal them afterwards.

Most of her friends had begun by falling in love with her; she had many lovers and she retained them all as friends. She could not conceive any happiness beyond duty and placed her ideals where she found so little, especially in marriage.

More than once during the days of her greatest beauty in the midst of a grand fête of which she was the queen she would weep bitterly.

She had what Shakespere calls "the milk of human kindness."


Sainte Beuve in his *Causerie du Lundi* says: "At the début of the Consulate one found her the most brilliantly applauded, fêted and youngest of the queens. She was proclaimed by everyone for her elegance, giving tone to the world, inventing by her art those things which stand for supreme beauty."





### *Chapter III*

#### THE BEGINNING OF THE EMPIRE

 **N**APOLÉON was elected consul for life on the second of August, 1802. He looked on this office as a stepping stone to being proclaimed Emperor.

He had a monstrous pride and an ever present affectation, which was so studied that it almost became second nature.

He used the chariot of war to gain the reign of peace. His Italian blood explained his quick sudden passions and complex nature. Having sprung from an unknown family he could only copy himself. His heavy face with its clean cut strong features was noticeably large for his body. The "grandmere" written by Beranger says: "He was egotism personified. He was dry and his coldness was an antidote for his imagination.

"He refused to tolerate the slightest independence.

"That his victories helped the relations existing between kings and their subjects is positive and they brought people out of their social enlargement in no small measure.

"He worked knowingly for the political and civil deliverance of nations while he established a most exacting kind of despotism trying to give Europe—and France more especially—the freest of constitutions. Napoleon was a tyrant disguised as a tribune."

Meanwhile the Empire was proclaimed on the fourth of May, 1804. The coronation was to take place

the second of December. Without waiting for any ceremony the Emperor started to form his household: he made all his sisters princesses. One day Fouché approached Madame Recamier and offered her a place as lady in waiting. He reminded her of how Bonaparte had saved her father. But she recalled to the chief of police how Napoleon had caused the execution of the Duke of Enghien and the exile of Germaine de Stael for her book "*Dix Années d'Exile*."

Fouché explained that she was causing danger for herself by taking this hostile attitude.

A few days later Juliette Recamier took breakfast with Princess Caroline, the sister of the Emperor. The minister of police, who was there, asked her for a decision, but all he received by way of reply was she could not accept this flattering offer.

Fouché never forgot this answer nor did Napoleon, and when, later on, Madame Recamier appealed to Napoleon to help save Monsieur Recamier's banking house she was given a curt, "No," with the additional comment, "Why should I be interested in her? She is not my mistress."

Juliette felt her husband's failure keenly, especially as she felt that Napoleon could have advanced to the bank enough money to tide over her husband's difficulty.

Shortly after this, she lost her mother. This double loss brought her to great sorrow. She sold her beautiful home with many of its rich furnishings and moved into a very modest apartment.

At about this time Juliette met René Chateaubriand; she met him one morning in the rooms of Madame de Stael.

When Chateaubriand met her he was thirty-two years of age. He was in the flower of his strength and he was famed for his slight figure and for his high, narrow shoulders.

But his spare figure and high shoulders were forgotten because of his beautifully shaped head. It was superb; especially fascinating was the high forehead, his dark wavy hair and his eyes, which had that drab color of the sea on a stormy day.

He was at his best when his thin sensitive lips were brightened by a smile; then his charm was irresistible, for as Count Molé said: "There are only three men who can smile in this manner: Bonaparte, Chateaubriand and myself."

It was in his silent room, so intimate and still, so mysterious in its lighting with a single lamp or two at best, that Chateaubriand received the best people of Paris, as though he were entertaining in the fashion of the Hotel de Montmorin. As a tribute to his hospitality he usually offered his guests a glass of sugar water or orangeade. It was Monsieur de Fontanes in the spring of 1800 who made him acquainted with the social and intellectual élite of Paris.

Without waiting to finish his first work, Chateaubriand, impatient to start the struggle for fame and success, set out to break his first lance. He hoped to become the literary rival of Germaine de Stael, who was admired for her clever brilliancy. His method of becoming her rival was to visit her a great many times—both at her salons and when she was alone.

One morning he was seated in her boudoir, engrossed in discussing his new book, *Attala*, and gazing in her

brilliant eyes. Glancing up he noticed a small fair face and a timid smile of a friendly looking young woman, with a very white skin and soft chestnut curls that fell softly over her low brow.

"This is my lovely friend Juliette Recamier, of whom Paris speaks so much and so kindly, these days," said Madame de Stael.

Chateaubriand accepted the introduction, that was all. Edouard Herriot describes the meeting of this man and woman, who were to have so much influence on each other's lives, thus: "Chateaubriand says, 'I was at Madame de Stael's one morning when she received me in her private apartment. Her maid was dressing her hair and during the time she talked brilliantly, rolling about in her fingers a little branch of green. All at once Madame Recamier, wearing a simple white dress, entered. She sat on a blue sofa. Madame de Stael who was standing continued her conversation which was extremely animated. She spoke with eloquence, but I scarcely made reply, as my eyes were fixed on Madame Recamier. In short I had not heard one word that Germaine had said after the fair Juliette entered the room. Madame Recamier went away shortly and I never saw her until twelve years later.'" This was when they met at the deathbed of Mme. de Stael.

At this time Chateaubriand was absorbed in his work on *Attala*. This story of primitive American life interested the French people greatly, for they had played a part in the American revolution and were glad to get vivid descriptions of the new country such as Chateaubriand wrote after his visit there.

The following words give the tone of the book:

"Sitting in the shades of the American forests I will sing those airs of solitude, never before heard by mortal ears. I will sing of your misfortunes at Natchez, of Louisiana, of which only remembrance remains.

"Have the misfortunes of obscure inhabitants of the woods, less right to our tears than those of other men?

"And are the mausoleums of kings in our temples more touching than the tombs of the Indian resting under the oaks of his country? And your flame of meditation, stars of the night be to me as a star of Pindus.

"March before my steps across the unknown regions of a new world, so that I may discover by your light the hidden secrets of these deserts."

Chateaubriand, accompanied by his guide, had gone up the course of the Meshaube, his bark floating at the feet of three hills which hid from view the beauty of the country that belongs to the children of the sun.

He disembarks, climbs the side of the embankment and reaches the highest of the three summits.

The great village of Natchez can be seen in the distance on a plain filled with sassafras. Here and there wandered the squaws, as light as the deer with which they play. On their left arms they carry baskets suspended by long strips of bark. They gather wild strawberries, the juice of which stains their fingers and the grass at their feet. René descended from the hill and went towards a village.

The women stopped at a distance to watch this unknown white man. Then they fled toward the woods

just like to doves that look at the hunter from a high rock and then flee at his nearer approach.

The travelers arrive at the first huts of the great village. They present themselves at the entrance of one of the wigwams. There a family is seated on straw mats; the men are smoking the calumets, the women are weaving.

Watermelons, pumpkins and May apples are drying on leaves and vines. The hollow of a bamboo serves as a drinking cup.

The travelers stopped at the doorway and Chateaubriand said: "We have come," and the chief of the tribe answered: "You have come. It is well." After which the visitors seated themselves on the mats and partook of the cooked meat without speaking. When this was done, one of the interpreters raised his voice and said: "Where is the sun?"

The chief answers, "Absent," and the silence falls once more. A young girl appears at the entrance of the wigwam. Her form is fine and graceful, resembling both the elegance of a palm and the imagination of a lovely dream. Her graceful movements are free and almost divine.

The Indians, to show the sadness and beauty of Celusta, said that she had the look of night and the smile of Aurora.

She was not yet an unfortunate woman, but destined to be one in the near future. One might have held this beautiful creature in one's arms, if one did not fear the heartbeat of one already consecrated to the sufferings of life.

Celusta comes from the wigwam, blushing, passes

before the strangers and whispers something in the ear of an old woman.

Then she retires.

Her white robe, made of the bark of a mulberry tree, floats gracefully and her bare rosy feet are seen at every step she takes.

The atmosphere was perfumed with the scent of the magnolia she left behind her. She looked much like Hero at the feast of Abydos. Such as Venus presented herself in the forest of Carthage by her walk and her ambrosial perfume that was given off from her tresses.

In the meanwhile the guides had finished their feast, and had risen saying: "Now let us go," and the chief made answer: "Go where your spirit directs." And they left, the chief not questioning the guides as to who this person was that heaven had entrusted to their keeping.

This story of early American life appeared in 1801 and met with surprise and enthusiasm. The French found much that was new and original in the romance of America. Everybody read René's book, and most of the opinions expressed were most flattering.

Occasionally there was a bit of adverse criticism that took the form of epigrams and witticisms.

Before Chateaubriand realized what was taking place he was being presented to Madame Bacchiocchi, then to the other sisters, and Lucien, their brother, introduced him to the consul Napoleon.

Then, followed his work on the *Genius of Christianity* and perhaps the best known of these chapters is the *Nature of Mystery*.

He says there is nothing beautiful, sweet and great in life, except those things that are mysterious. The most marvelous sentiments are those that agitate and confuse us a little—and shame true love. Sincere friendships are full of hidden secrets.

You might say that hearts that love, understand without being obliged to reveal themselves to each other.

Innocence in its turn which is only a holy ignorance is the most charming of mysteries.

A child is happy because he knows nothing. An old man is miserable because he knows everything, very fortunately for him, when the mysteries of life and those of death commence.

If it is thus with the feelings, it is thus with the virtues. The most holy are those which come directly from God, such as charity, and shrink from being looked at.

Germaine de Stael was antagonistic to the kind of writing René de Chateaubriand was doing and she went out of her way to ridicule his chapter "*Examen de la virginité sous ses rapports poetiques.*"

She felt confident that with such writings as this his book was doomed to failure.

She thought that Chateaubriand should be using his genius attacking Napoleon instead of flattering him, for she wanted Chateaubriand to remember that on the twentieth of February, 1802, he had eliminated twenty members from the Tribunal and Benjamin Constant among the others.

Chateaubriand went out of his way to oppose her in his *Attala* and other essays. She threw him and Napo-



leon her gauntlet by publishing her book "Literature considered in its relations with social institutions."

This challenge on her part of the de Stael explains why the great philosopher visited her salon less frequently and why the lasting friendship between Juliette and him did not begin until twelve years later.



## Chapter IV

### LETTERS

**A**BOUT this time, Juliette made a visit to England.

**S**he was introduced at once to the Duchess of Devonshire, a woman known for her great beauty. The duchess saw to it that Juliette made the acquaintance of Elizabeth Forster.

Such men as the Prince of Wales, the duc d'Orleans and the prince de Montpensier vied with each other to entertain her and to enjoy her company.

She was invited to theatres and to the opera and wherever she went the staring of the people annoyed her greatly.

One Sunday morning she appeared in Kensington Gardens. According to a fashion of the moment she wore a hat trimmed with a lace veil, and a long soft wrap that fell to her feet.

A crowd surrounded her, so dense that she was almost smothered. The triumph of this London visit is proven in this extract from a letter written by her friend Germaine.

"Dear Juliette, you remember well, a person who took a real interest in you, and who hopes to renew that friendship another winter. How do you govern your realm of beauty?

"Your Empire appeals to me, because you are so good, and natural, and such a dear nature, and that your sweetness is seen in your every expression. Of

your many admirers I love Adrien Montmorency the best. I have received remarkable letters expressing his spirit and his grace, and I believe in the genuineness of his affections notwithstanding the charm of his manner.

"For the rest, his word of solidity comes to me with such force that I feel that I do not play a second rôle in his heart. But you are the heroine of all his sentiments, heroine of all his tragedies and romances.

"My romance of Delphine will take place at the foot of the Alps. It will appear in 1802 and I hope you will read it with interest. I get much pleasure from my work. In speaking of your admirers I do not speak of M. de Narbonne; it seems to me if he classes himself among your friends I should rather have none. \* \* \* "

And another letter: "Dear Juliette, I left you suffering and I am anxious about your health. I hope that you will send me some news by my messenger. As soon as I am free to see you, I shall go to England but I trust that my visit will not bore you.

"The doubt you had of me in the last visit, created in me a certain defiance. But this doubt no longer remains, though I did not pardon you for a long time. Now I am sure to interest you because I have mentioned the coming visit to Adrien. You will hear my demur from Fox, for he has asked many questions about you.

"Here are the papers of the hospice which I have sent with care, and I hope that you will not overlook the little girls and the charming prophecy so worthy of your large heart. What has happened to the lovely Aline and to the Portuguese Romance? Tell him something charming from me. \* \* \* "

One of the leading critics of the time says:

"Nothing could be more touching than the attachment that existed between Madame de Stael and Madame Recamier. Different as those two women were, they had many points in common.

Madame Recamier was tenderly devoted to her mother and Madame de Stael was likewise passionately attached to her father. The quickness of the one in expressing new ideas was as great as the other's ability in grasping them. Germaine's masculine and strong mind discovered all things and Juliette's delicate and refined mind understood them all.

This formed a union which is impossible to paint without having been a witness to the association.

Time and again Juliette promised to visit Germaine who had been exiled by Napoleon to Coppet, on the lake of Geneva.

Her house there was an unpretentious brick and stone structure, overlooking the lovely waters of the lake.

Cold and unattractive though it was without, it was richly furnished. The walls were hung with handsome tapestries, there were bright satin hangings, while the carved furniture was also richly upholstered. On the marble topped tables were placed busts of Juliette, of Germaine's son, August de Stael, and the walls were adorned with paintings of herself as Corinne and in other classic poses.

The book cases in the library and studio were filled with rare editions of her own works and of many well known writers of the time.

The autumn of 1807 had been brilliant and animated

at Coppet. Among the many guests who were invited to the castle were M. de Montmorency, Eleazar Sabran, Benjamin Constant and Madame Recamier.

It was the first time she had gone to Switzerland but not the first time she had left Paris to see her friend in exile.

Juliette was delighted by the new surroundings: the beauty of the long lake, edged by the Alps appealed to her. Besides her own galaxy of French admirers she met there the German poet Werner, many brilliant and fascinating Italians, among them the marquis de Palmette, Charles de la Bedoyere and Pedro de Souza.

Sainte Beuve compared Germaine de Stael's Coppet with Voltaire's Ferney.

He said: "There were philosophical and general feelings mixed with enthusiasms, and suicide and divorce had representatives there as well as duty and virtue."

But there were many others who come ostensibly to visit Germaine de Stael. Most of these guests were fascinated for the moment by the brilliancy and cleverness of their hostess but they gave their hearts to Juliette Recamier.

While she was there Madame Lebrun the painter came to pay homage to her beauty. Among the others were M. de Sismondi the historian, M. de Barante the writer, Eleazar de Sabran and count de Golofkin, a Russian.

It was here at that time she met Prince Augustus of Prussia, the son of Prince Ferdinand, and nephew of the Great Frederic. He was made prisoner at the

battle of Saalfeld while his brother Louis was killed in the same engagement.

Madame de Genlis who wrote a book on the interesting meeting of the prince and Juliette speaks of the meeting of Athenais, as she had named Juliette, with royalty.

There was a custom at Coppet that the guests should write little notes to each other every day. Madame Recamier received many letters but only answered those of Madame de Stael.

The others she answered with a smile or a few words when meeting them the next day. Prince Augustus being made a prisoner on the eighth of February, 1807, after his release went first to Italy and then to Coppet.

Germaine had invited him to her château chiefly because she wanted to make a match between the prince and Juliette, her best friend.

He came at Madame de Stael's bidding and was soon infatuated by Juliette's charm and beauty, as had been dozens and dozens of suitors before him.

Madame de Genlis speaks of Juliette Recamier in the following manner: "The prince entered the salon with Madame de Stael. Suddenly another door opened and Athenais appeared. The grace of her figure and the charm of her beauty astonished him. He had expected to find a woman famous for her beauty, proud of her successes and with a confidence which one often finds in famous women.

"But instead of that he met a shy, young matron who blushed at the slightest provocation."

Prince Augustus was noticeable for his height, his heavy features, and golden hair which framed a good-

looking but rather effeminate face, made more so by an ever present smile.

His pale blue eyes were fixed with attention on the warm brown orbs and beige tresses of Juliette Recamier. After dinner they did not go out of doors on account of the great heat.

They went in the gallery of the château where the prince was entertained by Juliette, who played the harp and sang songs. This strong, good-looking chap of twenty-seven was captivated by her loveliness and her youth.

Another writer says: "Juliette Recamier kept to the end of her days her childish laugh and jesting manner; and she had a habit of putting her kerchief to her lips with a certain triumphant way.

"But in her early years this expression of childish caprice mixed with a gracious manner often brought her into serious complications. All these men who were attracted by her were not so easily gotten rid of; for instance Prince Augustus and Mathieu Montmorency.

"She had about her certain intrigues, many violences and revolts in her attractive hands over which she triumphed easily.

"Impudent in her innocence I have heard her say that she loved peril for others and for herself. With this hazardous and cruel desire she concerned herself greatly. She was good and had a tender heart. Though she created pain without wishing to, not only the men revolted against this coquetry, but women who were her rivals, felt wounded.

"There was a serious side to her nature and a charity which was hard for many to understand."



"She always had money for those in need. Likewise she had time for those who wished her counsel. This was the feeling she inculcated in the minds of La Harpe, Le Montey, the Montmorencies, Constant, Ballanche, the Ampères, the Prince Augustus and finally Chateaubriand."

The same writer adds: "With her natural instinct of purity and of real beauty, she felt kindly herself. Besides she was so admired and adored that one cannot forget her youth, neither her sunny mornings nor the day dreams with which she embellished them."

"Her childlike face with its shy expression, invariably looked away rather than towards the speaker and this habit caused the prince to remark to Germaine: 'You know what she is to the world but you do not know what she is to me. In any other time she would have been the charm of my life, but here, she is life itself. Here I enjoy all her soul, one of the purest which has been created. I enjoy her high and simple mind which is so firm and graceful, so refined and natural. Ever occupied with her friend's successes, she has no pretensions and yet might have them all.'"

The prince wasted no time in making his confession of love to Juliette.

This proud woman blushed and her heart beat quickly with pride. But she explained that though she was flattered by the prince's confession, she must say "No." It must be friendship and nothing more. "My religion opposes divorce especially with the idea of remarriage," she explained.

To this the prince answered "Yes, but as your friend

Germaine de Stael says,—your husband is one in name only.”

Juliette thought for an instant and queried: “But suppose I should obtain a divorce? I feel sure that your uncle Frederic the Great, would object to a prince of royal blood marrying a mere Frenchwoman.”

Prince Augustus bowed low and with his most gracious smile replied: “Remember that your beauty, modesty and charm, would overcome any prejudice that my uncle might have. To show you that I am sincere in what I have said, allow me to prove it to you.”

Taking a penknife from a pocket, he suddenly cut a small vein in his wrist, and dipped a pen in the blood. Seizing a bit of paper from a nearby desk, he wrote these words: “I swear by my honor and by my love to conserve in all its purity the sentiment which I attach to Juliette Recamier; to keep the sentiment, to concern myself with all the affairs that will make this marriage possible and not to interest myself in any other woman, while I have the hope of uniting myself with her.”

When the fact became generally known that the prince was laying siege to Juliette’s heart, Benjamin Constant felt piqued for he had been in love with her for years, though she never had yielded to his words of praise.

With little imagination one can fancy him saying:

“Time counts for little when I have a rival as subtle as a German prince. Yes, very subtle. Do you remember, Juliette, how clever he was when riding horseback with us yesterday? The prince said to me: ‘M. de

Constant, suppose you take a little gallop ahead?" Juliette laughed lightly and the woebegone lover continued: "I was obliged, naturally, to ride ahead, but I understood thoroughly what the prince meant and desired."

Before the prince left the château he had Juliette's promise to write often, a promise that Juliette sealed by the gift of some beautiful flowers.

The prince in turn gave to her a gold bracelet, attached to a chain, which contained a heart made of a priceless ruby. Juliette had already written to her husband and told him that the prince had asked her hand in marriage, if she were free, and asked Recamier to release her from her wedded vows.

The answer came that if she so wished it, he would grant her request, provided that the divorce should be granted somewhere outside of Paris.

"But," he wrote, "I still love you as much, yes, even more than I did the day I took you, a young beautiful girl, to the Hotel de Ville."

In the meantime Prince Augustus was sending her passionate love letters. Two of a number of these letters are published by Edouard Herriot in a work on Madame Recamier and Her Friends, and they were copied from the unpublished archives of M. de Lomenie.

On the sixth of November, 1807, the prince addressed the following letter to her: "I write to you, my dear Juliette, from a little town, two days distant from where I shall be located for some time. I experienced some sad feelings when I went through that country where I lost a dear brother. Since his body was

embalmed I was in hopes that I might recognize him, but unfortunately that was not the case. I heard of the brave way in which he lost his heroic life, which was oh, so much more than his death. It is only when I think of you, my dear, that I can soften the sadness by which I am held. The pleasure I had in meeting my parents, my children and my friends shall be mixed with unpleasant remembrances. The hope that I shall still be useful to my country, this alone, makes these feelings bearable.

"It is now very late and someone is waiting to forward this letter for me. Goodbye, Augustus."

Madame Recamier answered this letter by reassuring the prince that she would keep her promise.

She tried to let him know that she had scruples concerning her husband's reply to her letter. That in spite of his present misfortune, he looked for good fortune ahead.

On the 14th of November Augustus wrote to Juliette the following letter: "I had, dear Juliette, the inexpressible joy that seldom comes, by receiving your letter. You have calmed my fears which were strong until I received your dear words. I see no change to your faithful promise. But I fear for the obstacles over which we have no control.

"It is impossible for me to paint for you the joy my return has brought to my parents and to my friends. My father and mother felt that they would never see me again. Unfortunately, we have not seen the last of the evils, and that makes me worry for our very existence. I have announced my homecoming to my cousins and I am awaiting their letters.

"Your tender fears for M. Recamier have amused me much and the results have given me hope for the future. It is my good fortune that he does not know how to appreciate you and that I have profited by the happiness that he might have had.

"If you are necessary to his happiness how could he amuse himself in your absence? I swear to you dear Juliette that I can no longer be happy without you, and I am waiting with impatience the moment when I shall have the good fortune of seeing you again. Do not forget the portrait which you promised me. I have already given orders to have a portrait painter found to do mine for you. Goodbye dear love, give me more news of yourself, shortly, for this is my only consolation, when I am away from you."



## Chapter V

### THE INTRUSION OF SORROW

**L**ITTLE by little Juliette Recamier realized that there were many obstacles between the prince and herself, and her letters grew less frequent.

Especially she realized the obstacles that stood in his way; securing a divorce from his present wife, placating his uncle Frederic and these dreads now filled her with fear.

Many of her friends censured her for this serious and dangerous flirtation.

Camille Jordan was among this number. On the other hand Germaine de Stael was equally emphatic in the prince's favor. She argued with Juliette that she would be better off at the German court than constantly living in danger of being served with a letter of cachet by Napoleon.

Juliette tried to forget these pangs of remorse that shook her very nature during those last days at Coppet by entering into some of the dancing parties and theatricals that were given there.

Speaking of her beautiful dancing, Morand, the famous teacher, in his *Souvenir de Geneva* writes: "During the year that I had the pleasure of vegetating there, I should have been dead of ennui a hundred times, if I had not had the joy of dancing with one of your compatriots, a woman whose memory shall always remain with me.

"A woman who embodied the grace, the ease, the

subtlety and the charm of Terpsichorean Art." And he continued:

"Without doubt you remember this admirable creature. Who has not heard of the beautiful Juliette Recamier and who has not admired her lovely pictures?

"One day when I had the honor of finding myself at Coppet, Madame de Stael was anxiously awaiting, to see Juliette dance the gavotte and she implored me to be her partner. Ah Monsieur, what an adorable creature, what abandon, what freedom in all her movements. It is enough to make one lose his head.

"Also I surpassed myself. I could not have danced better. Madame de Stael carried away with enthusiasm, embarrassed her friend and cried: 'Bravo, Morand.' A bravo from Germaine de Stael, monsieur, was a great balm for me.

"It meant more to me than any of the applause at the Paris Opera. Oh, it was a beautiful joy. The most beautiful in my life, perhaps. A real antidote against the ungrateful lessons which I had to give to those men and women whose joints were more fashioned for bending than for dancing."

Juliette also had considerable dramatic talent and her acting was always admired.

The big theatrical success of the season was "Theremene," a drama in which an old man was conspicuously figured.

The part was played by M. Prangins, whose figure was colossal and in the play he looked like a demigod. But the spectators were delighted with the part of Ancie, which was portrayed by Juliette Recamier.



Her friends said that it was a triumph of art over nature, for she put into the part the sweetness, the simplicity, the modesty and seduction that were required and a certain melancholy.

Madame de Stael played the rôle of Phedre, because it gave her an opportunity to play herself.

The château of Coppet was soon emptied of its brilliant guests. Germaine had planned a second trip to Germany and Austria. She took with her M. Schlegel, a tutor to her children. Benjamin Constant stayed behind for he had just completed his Wallenstein.

Juliette returned to Paris and her husband pleaded so hard, that she finally wrote to Prince Augustus explaining that she appreciated his profound respect and admiration, but wished to be released from her promise.

During this year of separation Germaine and Juliette wrote to each other frequently, and the letters from Germaine were counted among her most brilliant achievements.

On the twentieth of December Germaine wrote from Munich: "I have passed five days here and I leave Vienna in an hour. Now I am thirty leagues further away from all that is dear to me. My heart is in Italy but society here has been delightful and all have spoken of you, my beautiful friend, with admiration.

"You have a wonderful reputation. The bracelet you gave to me caused the men to kiss my hands very often, and I received a great amount of homage. I no longer like Munich. It petrifies me."

At no time in her life was Juliette more stricken than when she returned to Paris in 1807.

The grief because of her mother's death was still keen. The loss of her husband's fortune meant that she must sell her lovely home and furniture and practice the strictest economy. She was still fond of Prince Augustus and would have waited until all obstacles had been brushed away, had it not been that her sense of duty controlled her actions.

Rochefoucauld, discussing Madame Recamier, says that she was a grand and spiritual woman; amiable at all times. Yet, always a coquette, conquering and prudent, unsatiable in her thirst for homage and adoration, consummate in the art of distributing her grace and friendship and placing her vanity on guard, for conquests as well as to be conquered.

He adds that she was much more beloved than loving, because she never really gave herself up to anyone, and conserved at all times, because she would not fling herself away. True queen of the salon, in her little room at the Abbaye aux Bois, as well as in her former beautiful home in the Chaussee d'Antin, ever a charming hostess, but much more than that—a good wife and a good mother to her adopted child, a fine friend to her many would-be lovers.

Isolated in the midst of her adorers, worshiped by loyal friends, by devoted servants—she was too amiable with everyone to be always sincere.

Exhausted at times by the Empire in which she ruled, but always contented to receive homage, she was in harmony with nature and what it held for her.

Juliette's constitution then as later, was strong and

healthy, except for twinges of rheumatism from which she had suffered ever since girlhood. Because of this malady she was constantly looking for fresh air, exercise and solitude.


Time and again she told her friends: "Blessed be the independence of my soul. Traveling tires me but I love it because of the independence it gives, as I am inclined to country life, since it gives me solitude.

"Solitude pleases me, but at times I even am wearied by this very desire for solitude. I have inherited this one illness which I must carry through life."



## Chapter VI

### A SUMMER AT COPPET

HOUGH Germaine de Stael was now in exile in Switzerland, never was her salon more brilliant than at Coppet.

Most of the savants went to Coppet to enjoy the surroundings and to listen to literary and political discussions and even her women friends enjoyed the lovely country and the atmosphere created by the great writers and philosophers of the time.

Alexander Adryne, a writer, after visiting this unique estate on Lake Geneva, writes: "Alas, I turn my eyes to recall Coppet, where Madame de Stael made a reputation so celebrated by the halo of her glory; an astonishing woman who attracts, seduces you, enlivens you, makes you have faith in the destiny of man by showing you what is good and worth while. A heart which loves the true, the beautiful and inspires you.

"To characterize her work, to specify the quality of her genius, one must compose a word, and this word is 'Heart.' Mentality, that is to say an association of the sensibility and the subtlety of enthusiasm of reason—of poetry and of analysis.

"It is not that she degrades the human species.

"Her history if she finds time to write one, will not be a pleading and philippic against the human race, but a lesson for those who wish to study it.

"In reading it I am proud to understand, proud

to feel even to the last intricacy of thought, the judgments, the elated poetry of a soul which is alone and shall remain alone as a brilliant illustration that God does not exclude from his world the intellectuals, but gives them an opportunity to sing of the glory of his creation.

"We reached the château and asked permission to see her when I suddenly recalled the real purpose of my visit was to see the illustrious Morand, teacher of dancing, to whom I had promised to pay my respects.

"In a few minutes Madame de Stael appeared and soon we were chatting together. Nothing may be imagined more singular, more original than this place, the woodwork and panels being painted in five different colors."

At this time Camille Jordan did much to help Juliette Recamier when she was most perplexed. While a young man Camille visited Germany and Switzerland with a friend called Degarando.

Mathieu Montmorency, one of Juliette's most intimate friends, was with him. Then he made a tour of England and returned to France. During those early years of the nineteenth century he made the friendship of Juliette Recamier, Germaine de Stael and later on with Ballanche.

Being at Coppet a part of the time when the Prince Augustus was there he was opposed to this flippant courtship, and she listened to his counsel.

She was attracted to him, and she inspired him with a great esteem, and a true confidence. He divided this feeling with Mathieu de Montmorency, though in a less degree, but his friendship was more rigid.

Few men had the same amount of great qualities and severer virtues which commanded the respect and the charms that went all through life.

The turn of originality in his mind, his ardor, a certain naïve candor even to the point of being a bit provincial added to his charm.

The following is only one of many charming letters that Camille Jordan wrote to her during these years:

"I understand how much suffering you have gone through. Though I have not seen you in a long time I appreciate how much you have suffered and through your other misfortunes, how much emptiness is left in your life. That has made your soul sombre.

"With my sincere feelings I offer you consolation. You have many friends and they have the warmest feelings of sympathy for you. I hope that you will always put me among those friends who have made life sweet for you.

"Remember me kindly to M. Recamier, to your cousin and to Madame de Catellan. You have not answered my last letters. Please give me some news of yourself through the latter lady. I hope that I shall hear that you are less sad than I thought and believe me, your warm friend, Camille Jordan."

The high tide in Juliette's life was between 1808 and 1810, when a correspondence took place between Germaine de Stael and herself. Although Juliette had given up the idea of accepting Prince Augustus' love she enjoyed receiving news of Austrian and German court life, as this letter from Madame de Stael shows:

"I think in tenderness, while writing you, of my little cell. In reading this letter your feeling is warmer

for the ten years of acquaintanceship; an affection so sweet and pure that nothing can alter it and on which we can repose our entire future. But how sad it is that I write this to you two hundred leagues away, and am not able to dine with you and meet your family.

"At least I hope that we all shall be united some day. You think of me who could be so happy and who is so far away and sad. Good-bye—good-bye. Be happy and remember your friend, Germaine."

Writing from Coppet, Germaine says:

"How much your amiable letter touched me, dear friend; how good of you to copy all the news and send it to me. The whole household here assembled to read them, and they run from room to room exclaiming: 'There is a letter from Juliette Recamier.' You have, during one moment, by your letter taken again that place and inspired that life and interest which you used to put in us, at the castle of Coppet, now so silent and serious.

"I have made a sacrifice to prudence for you in giving up seeing you this year but next summer nothing shall hinder our meeting.

"My theatre is a solitude. I do not have the courage to play Wallenstein. When you are not here I have little desire to take any pleasure. Therefore I work on my letters a great deal. Germaine."

About this same time Juliette received the following letter: "Dear Juliette, my heart is beating with the pleasure of seeing you. Try to give me as much time as it is possible, for I am staying here for three months only and I have to speak to you of three years.



"Invite those of your friends and of mine who do not fear solitude and exile. I wish that chance would lead M. Lemontey in those parts. I would give him my book to read.

"Could not Talma give me a few days? I hope you will like it here but if I find again what made me so happy at Coppet, I trust that you will not become sad. Will you tell M. Adrien that I flatter myself with the idea of seeing him and that I apply to Mathieu to help me?

"You must get to Ecure, Dept. of Loure and Cher, three leagues farther than Blois. This is also my address for letters, and there a little boat will bring you to the castle of Catherine of Medici who has done more evil than you.

"Tell me the hour, so that I may meet you. It will take you about sixteen or seventeen hours and it will perhaps be best to stay a night at Orleans and come on here for dinner. It would be less tiresome for you. I press you to my heart."

In the year 1810 Madame Recamier went to take the waters at Aix en Savoie and then went to visit Germaine de Stael who had left Germany and taken up her residence at the château Chaumont sur Loire to superintend the editing of her work on Germany.

The château which appeared in all its splendor was doubly interesting from a point of view of art. The Cardinal Amboise, Diana of Poitiers, Catherine de Medici had all been its guests. It was situated on the left bank of the Loire. The large Gothic towers gave a view of vastness to the place with moss and a high terrace.

The court was filled with flowers for this was a most fertile part of France. Madame de Stael spent some days there in the company of Juliette, Mathieu de Montmorency, the two Barrantes and William Schlegel.

Benjamin Constant who had been spending much of his time at Coppet took every opportunity to continue his romantic correspondence with Juliette. From Coppet he addressed her in these words: "You wrote, madame, such an agreeable letter to Madame de Stael that without doubt she will promptly answer it. I have no pretext for writing to discuss the commission you gave me. I confess that I am writing to you for the pleasure it gives me, and to recall to you that if you have forgotten me it will mean great suffering. I have been here nearly eight days but Coppet seems to me to be a real desert without you. Mathieu alone is here and he expects to remain three weeks more. I do not know if M. de Sabran is expected.

"There is to be a grand Swiss fête here next week. This will be a small souvenir of last year. Madame de Stael seems to be less happy about her separation from Paris than when you saw her last. I have not finished Wallenstein. Do you know if Prosperé is in Paris? If he is, he could not be passing his life in any better way than in your company, and he is fortunate in having permission to consecrate himself.


"I am resigned to let him play my part of confidant until my return to Paris. This rôle belongs to me and I hope you will not give it permanently to another. Good-bye, madame; believe me there is no person more constant than Constant."






## *Chapter VII*

### JULIETTE'S EXILE

NOTHER short glimpse of happiness came into Juliette's life while she was visiting her friend Germaine in the stately château at Chaumont sur Loire. A charm gushed into her young life as she sauntered through the lovely woods and picked flowers in the gardens during those warm, lazy summer months.

Germaine was busy during the day examining the proof sheets of her three-volumed book on Germany, and giving them to some friends to read. Both women were so care-free that they felt that nothing could mar the joy of this isolated retreat.

They improvised concerts and frequently Juliette sang while Albertine de Stael accompanied her on the harp. As Germaine said: "God wishes this to be the summer of summers."

Auguste de Stael, Germaine's only son, had grown to manhood.

This tall, well built young fellow with dark hair and eyes appreciated Juliette's beauty, ever increasing in spite of heartaches. By the twenty-third of September, the proofs were revised. Germaine had persuaded Juliette to return to Paris and present the manuscript to Esmenard, censor of the theatre and libraries, and chief of the third division of general police.

On the twenty-sixth of September, Germaine went with Mathieu de Montmorency to the "vast plaines

of Vendomois." Toward midnight they heard strangers entering the château of Conan which belonged to Montmorency's family. The romance of the adventure, the originality of the escapade, made her forget the police.

The police entered the château with orders to seize all the manuscripts on Germany. M. Fortuny Gorbigny was a gallant official. He awaited the return of Madame de Stael; her son Auguste arrived in time to save the scripts, but when Mathieu saw her, he found her weeping over the thought of being separated from her newly finished work.

In the meanwhile Germaine had been in Paris escorted by her son Auguste de Stael. She was using her most winning glances and charming smiles on the Duke of Rovigno and others. He answered that Madame de Stael had made a mistake in praising the Prussians.

He told Auguste that his mother might stay where she was for seven or eight days longer, but no more. In the meantime Juliette was using her influence with Queen Hortense. Germaine sent to Juliette a letter which she had written to the Emperor and it was presented to him by Hortense. It ran as follows:

"They have told your majesty that I miss Paris because of the Museums and because of Talma. This exile is surely an agreeable pastime though Cicero and Bolinbroke have said that it is unsupportable. But how much I love those masterpieces of art that France owes to your majesty. When I think of the tragedies, images of heroism, I realize that we owe them to you.

"And if Heaven gave me imagination, I must use it to enjoy these arts. So many people ask so many things of your majesty, why need I blush to ask for friendship, for poetry, for music, pictures—all that is ideal, which I owe to the monarch of France."

Napoleon was touched by this letter, but he said:

"I do not wish this woman back in France, and I have good reasons. If she were Republican or Royalist, it would make no difference to me; she is a machine in movement that stirs salons."

With this answer Juliette went back to Paris and Madame de Stael had her book seized and was ordered out of France. On the sixth of October, Germaine passed through Fosse, still in doubt whether she was bound for the United States or for England.

Juliette knew before she was through with the police in Paris, that it was Napoleon who wished the book of her friend suppressed. He held that it was anti-French, dangerous to him and to the political life of the nation. It was in 1810 that Juliette's friend of early childhood, William von Humboldt, who was indifferent in political affairs, took a hand in forming the higher education of Germany by the founding of the University of Berlin.

Speaking of this and other literary German movements, Germaine de Stael wrote: "Nothing dominates this world but ideas."

Juliette remained in Paris for a short time receiving letters from Germaine. They were filled with doubt whether she would go abroad or remain in France. Juliette persuaded some of her friends to visit Coppet from time to time. She first commended

Prosper to Germaine's care. Germaine was delighted with the short interview she had with him and thanked Juliette for her kindness, and begged her to use her influence also with Benjamin Constant.

Juliette finally accomplished this and Germaine wrote to her: "No one can have any idea of what exile is. It is the hydra-headed monster as regards unhappiness."

Juliette finally stopped all intercourse with Prince Augustus of Prussia. She was told that the prince was leading a most retired life, excepting during times of court presentations.

Juliette was now determined to forget her romantic affair in her domestic life, looking after the personal wants of her husband and the household. About this time she adopted a young girl, a niece of Monsieur Recamier. She later in life became Madame Lenormant and has in her possession some of the most prized documents referring to Juliette Recamier and her friends.

Madame Lenormant, writing of her aunt, says:

"Suddenly my uncle took me by the hand and led me to the house where he lived with his wife at 32 Rue Blanc. I still remember that visit; she was robed in white, her hair was beautifully dressed and she was reclining on a lounge, placed near a hearth, close to her portrait by Gerard.

"General Junot was seated near by. My uncle opened the door and as I entered Madame Recamier said: 'Here is the little one I have been waiting for!' To be exact I had been going to school for more than a year; to a religious school at Belley where they taught us to read—but I feigned that I could not read.



“My aunt put a book in my hand and said: ‘Please read that, for me.’ I took the book and without any hesitation I tried to read a chapter dedicated to M. le Dauphin. My aunt laughed and said that she must teach me how to read properly.” In the midst of extreme pressure and successes which forced themselves on her, Madame Recamier, after her withdrawal from society, modified her régime with this child.

At this same time the young Ampère came into her life; he was but eighteen and a half years of age. His admiration for Juliette is the story of a boy’s first love affair with a woman considerably older than himself. He was attracted by her beauty and charm which he colored with his youthful imagination.

Ampère’s smooth face made him look extra boyish.

His conversation was remarkable and his book knowledge was in great contrast with his absolute ignorance of worldly affairs.

He had a delightful way of talking and had a wonderful smile and winning manner.

Juliette responded to this young man’s desire for her friendship, was attracted by his superior soul, and the generous enthusiasm of his aspirations.

Because of these traits, he was admitted as a son and brother in the Recamier household. In the early part of 1811 Germaine de Stael wrote to one of her friends telling them how unbearable her life without them was proving to be.

Finally Mathieu de Montmorency took courage and started for Coppet to pay his respects to his literary friend. On the 17th of August, 1811, he received orders from the chief of police to remain at

Geneva and not to re-enter Paris. He was allowed to go to Coppet or in any direction that would be forty leagues from the capital.

In spite of this advice and warning to Mathieu, Juliette went to Coppet. She saw a heroic adventure in the trip, and went without telling her friends. She arrived a few days after Mathieu received his letter of exile. Mathieu hurried after her to warn her of her danger.

Juliette stopped and rested in a little village.

The two talked it all over and decided to go on to Coppet.

Juliette felt that Mathieu had gone into exile for her sake. She hurried on to assure her aunt that she was all right; this aunt who had little love for her.

When Mathieu learned that he had been exiled by Napoleon he was indignant because he felt that a certain woman of the world had caused the order to be given. He insisted that Juliette return to France at once. But she found on returning to Paris that the order of exile was sent to Coppet, but having arrived some time after her departure from Chalons on the Marne.


The police knew that she had left Coppet and sent the following notice to her husband:

“Paris, 17th September, 1811.

“I beg you to tell me, monsieur, if you received the order which I sent to you on the third of this month? And if you can tell me the whereabouts of Madame Recamier, your wife? I have the honor of greeting you. The Consul of State, the Prefect of Police and Baron of the Empire.”

## *Chapter VIII*

### JULIETTE IN ROME

 JULIETTE Recamier and her party arrived at Rome during passion week. We must not fancy the Rome of 1812 to have been what it was some twenty or thirty years later. Rome then, had no Pope, no cardinals, and it was not the capital of the Catholics. It was the head of the Department of the Tiber.

The French troops then as now were masters of Rome.

They reached Rome shortly before Christmas. Madame Recamier took rooms near the Place d'Espagne via Bambino, opposite the Greek church.

Her niece and Ballanche lived with her. Jean Jacques Ampère spent his days there also. He lived an enchanted life given over to his love and to the marvels of the town, which he was to see and explore so thoroughly.

Ballanche was much in the company of Juliette during those days. His soul drank in the beauty of Rome and the inspiration which she gave to him. He writes:

"This evening seemed like a happy dream to me. I am delighted with it. I try to collect my ideas and happiness fills my soul and my mind.

"I shall not see you whom I love so much, as there are many things to divide us; your old friends, your new friends and so many ties. Oh, if we were only alone. At least 'mid many obstacles I get a few

moments, a few hours of grief, of delight and of delicious sadness.

"A few of these moments shed charm and regret on my life. The more I know you the more I love you. My writings, my aims, my success, my troubles all belong to you. You inspire me, you console me, you raise me. I shall compose my poem Juliette because you like it, because it will be delightful to pronounce your name in my verses and paint under this name a pure soul which is tender and generous; and that beauty which is lost in your eyes, on your face, which sweetens your voice, which makes your smile more beautiful, which gives all charm to your manner.

"You have asked me to give a word portrait of you. I have made it without noticing it."

The Countess of Boigne, one of Juliette's best friends, after hearing that she had been served a letter of cachet, wrote to her: "I was in hope that your fears were not well founded, as you are the most guiltless person. It is not because you are sweet, good and natural in finding the secret. You are never indifferent to the wants of others.

"You know how I adore your character, your kindness, and I am only too glad to speak of them. It seems strange to praise the goodness of the sweetest woman in Europe. I am persuaded that if one can define that influence, you exercise more than others who are more brilliant, you exercise it with no less power. In this sad position you will find many friends."

When Germaine heard of Juliette's exile she wrote the following letter:

"I cannot speak to you, I throw myself at your feet. In the name of Heaven have courage for yourself so that I can live. Ah, my God, I cannot think. Pull yourself out of this, that I may know that you are happy, that your splendid generosity may not be your undoing.

"But I adore you. Believe it, and prove it to me in occupying yourself about your own welfare, because I shall have no rest if you are in exile. Good-bye—Good-bye, when shall I see you again? Not in this world. Germaine."

Before going to Rome, Juliette spent some time in Lyons visiting friends and relatives. While she was there, helping the poor, in many ways helped to absorb her time and thoughts.

But she found little comfort, for many of the people were Imperialists, grateful to Napoleon for having restored the city from ruins.

After a short stay in Lyons she took her niece and a maid and went to Rome. She lived at Serni's place d'Espagne.

But at the end of a few weeks she took a palace called the Fiano, and opened her salon to the French. Her friend, Camille Jordan, introduced her to a French writer, a brilliant young man named Ballanche. He was as timid as he was clever. A story is told that the first time he called on Juliette with his friend Camille, he took off his boots and left them before her door until he came out.

His features were lively, sometimes little expressive, but his smile was full of grace and kindness. Deep as well as clever and sometimes original, M.

Ballanche was a type of honor and social virtue. He impressed Juliette very much from the beginning because he believed in his own ideas, ideas that he had created for himself about religion and concerning poetry.

It was only to her and to Camille Jordan that he spoke with frankness. Otherwise he kept his opinions to himself because they satisfied his mind and heart.

From the beginning their friendship was genuine and sincere, and Ballanche looked upon her as everything that was good and pure. Juliette held the same kindly feeling for him. She accorded him great confidence and she held an important place in his life.

Before she knew him many weeks she observed that his speech was eloquent and pure. When she complimented him he received the praise without pride and she loved to take his advice. Ballanche was the son of a printer. His face had been disfigured by an operation though it was by no means ugly.

His eyes were very bright, large and intelligent.

The lower part of his face was swollen on one side as if from toothache. His appearance was simple, perhaps a little uncouth, but there was a most remarkable benevolence in his countenance while his voice and manner gave an impression of being thoroughly pleasant to all who had any discrimination.

He never asked anything in return for his intense devotion; the pleasure of looking and listening was enough. The first time he called to see Juliette she noticed that his speech was slow, but all his ideas were refined, pure and noble and his taste was exquisite.

It was Juliette's mind and her spiritual nature that appealed to him. He was ignorant of all foreign literature except Italian and French, but he knew these two fluently. He made up his mind that Juliette must study Italian and help him at his writings. His friends always spoke of Juliette as his Beatrice since by his worship of her they recalled Dante's love for Beatrice.

At this time the ceremonies of Passion Week were not performed in the Sistine chapel, but in the chapel of St. Peter. The Pope was held a prisoner at Fontainebleau, and a mournful spirit seemed to hover about the whole city. The aversion to the French domination was noticeable in all ranks of society. The only house where French people assembled was at Madame Recamier's.

Ballanche was the high-light to these visitors the short time he was there. A story was told that the night he arrived Juliette invited a small party of friends to see the coliseum.

Noticing that Ballanche was bareheaded she entreated him to put on his hat. He laughed and explained that in his excitement, created by his prospective visit, he had left his hat behind.

While there he read a part of his famous poem, called *Antigone*, which created such a stir, both in Paris and in Lyons. Before leaving Rome he wrote the beautiful *Fragment* which was later inserted in one of his books. Ballanche would have spent much more time in Rome but his father insisted on his return to Lyons. He explained to his friends that his love for Juliette was of the purest kind, that which a brother would have for a sister.

He knew that he developed in her presence like a withered plant which is favored by sunshine. From that time on, he was her all in all, and never asked one favor for his untiring devotion.

In the meantime Constant was pouring out letter after letter full of love. Juliette inspired him to these words which he wrote in "Adolphe":

"Charm of love, who could paint you? This idea that we have found, the being which nature created for us, this light spread on our lives, which seems to explain its mystery.

"This foolish gayety mixed with unusual sadness. This forgetfulness of all vulgar things, this superiority of all things above us, this certainty that henceforth the world cannot reach us where we live. He who knows you can never describe you. Good-bye, Benjamin Constant."

In 1814 when the King of Prussia and Emperor of Austria took Paris after the defeats in Russia, peace and moderation seemed to be everywhere. The shops were opened, Russian soldiers six feet tall were driven across the roadways by the French.

Going back to Paris Juliette took a comfortable house and welcomed her new friends as well as the old ones in the same warm-hearted manner she had when she dwelt in magnificence.

Benjamin Constant continued his love making which she received with more indifference than ever.

Speaking of Jean Ampère, Scherer says: "He has been all kinds of things, traveling professor, writer and poet. Few men have traveled so much and observed so much. We have seen him quite young,



visiting Germany and the north of Europe. Italy attracted him later on.

"He saw Belgium, Holland, England, Spain and Greece occupied him for a long time. But Egypt and the United States and Mexico provided him with subjects for some great works.

"As a scientific man Ampère has gone through everything. Languages, literature and history. He studied Scandinavian and basque hieroglyphics.

"He made a special study of the origin of the language and literature of France.

"He tried to make out the history of Rome from Romulus to Constantine. He wrote dramas and poetry."

It was at this time of Juliette's supremacy, the moment when her mind and beauty of face were at their height, that Ballanche brought young Ampère to her salon.

For a while he followed her about wherever he could and poured out his love with real passion.

Ampère seems to have had two tendencies in his youth. One of pure poetry and the other of history. By the first he felt himself attracted to be one of the poets who were heard as with a new lyre about the year 1819. By the other he was incited to be one of the historians who in the ten later years of the Restoration had found in foreign literature, larger views.

Ampère threw himself in both directions with all the fire of youth. He was one of the first men in France who had traveled in other countries with the aim of study under all zones. He went to Weimar to talk with Goethe, to Scandinavia and to Italy, to

meet with other great minds and to inform himself about the best.

His method was to take things by their origin and to develop them in all their branches.

One could fancy him an engineer, drawing a map of France. From the beginning his writings were full of his pure nature. *Hilda* was the title of his Gaul-Germanic novel. He drew in it a picture of pure Christian marriage where the husband and wife were no more than brother and sister; where the blushing bride was still a virgin. On the other hand, Juliette was inspiring Ballanche to his best writing. He wrote very little while in Paris without first showing it to her. Though he loved Juliette more every day he only asked for sympathy and friendship in return.

One of his most brilliant writings was "*Essai sur les Institutions Sociales dans leur rapport avec les Idées Nouvelles*." Finally his family called him back to Lyons in 1815.

On leaving he told Juliette: "I would give all I have in the world for twenty-four more hours in Paris." He did return some time later and enjoyed all the privileges of Juliette's salon.

In the meantime Madame de Stael had married M. de Rocca, and Juliette hoped they would spend a great deal of time in Paris. But Germaine's husband's health failed and she took her daughter, engaged to the Duke de Broglie, and accompanied by M. Schlegel, they went to Italy. Later she returned to Coppet where her husband's health was most uncertain.

The one joyous note in her life was the marriage of her daughter. As she says in the following letter:

"Our marriage, dear Juliette, has come off well. After the ceremony no emotion in life can be compared to this, and what is better, to the impression that there is not one moment that I do not grow more attached to M. de Broglie. His conduct has been delicate and he is very true. His character is virtuous and I bless God and my father for having given me a friend for my daughter who is as worthy of esteem and feeling."

Finally she returned to Paris to enjoy her friends and Juliette's salon, but her strength was rapidly failing. The following is one of many affectionate letters that Germaine wrote to Juliette during those trying days:

"Tell me, dear Juliette, if you are well enough to accept my carriage at nine o'clock and come and spend a few hours with me. I am not strong enough to go to you. If you come, tell Mathieu that I am waiting for him at my home. I kiss you with all my heart. Germaine."

Juliette spent much of her time with her friend, reading and offering those nice little attentions one woman can bestow on another. Juliette read to her passages from *L'Allemagne*, which was her favorite. This passage was especially appropriate at this time: "Poetry is of all arts the one which belongs most to reason. However, Poetry neither admits analysis nor explanation."

"A man who would bring forth a new truth would write rather in a language which exactly and precisely expresses thought. He would rather try to convince by reason than through the imagination."

Poetry has been more often consecrated to praise than to censure despotic powers.

"Art in general can sometimes contribute by its power to form subjects such as tyrants wish. Art can give letters to the mind by everyday pleasures. It brings man to the sensations and they inspire the soul with a philosophy which is voluptuous, with a reasonable carelessness, a love of the present, a forgetfulness of love favorable to tyranny.

"Passions alone tie one strongly to life by the ardent wish of waiting the day of their fulfillment, but this life consecrated to pleasure amuses without captivating; it prepares an intoxication called sleep and death."

Germaine de Stael's health continued to fail rapidly.

For hours and hours at a time she would remain half-reclining in a large easy chair. About the mouth and chin the oval face was shrunken to half its size. The one time lambent eyes were quiet, almost glassy in their repose. The expressionless look was in keeping with the purplish color of the full lips.

Her cold hand was resting in Juliette's beautiful hand, whose questioning eyes were on her. She was there to satisfy every want of Germaine. Juliette's head was bowed in silent prayer and even her dying friend would not have been conscious of her fervor at this moment had she not dropped some tears on Germaine's cold hand.

"Don't weep, my dear Juliette," said Germaine in a weak anxious voice. "I am not suffering, I am happy. See the sun pouring in the room; it tells you how sweet and calm I feel."

She rested her tired head against the chair and there was no sign of the struggle going on as life flickered out, like a candle blown by a strong wind. Her full eyes opened wide and steadied themselves as they looked on Juliette's sad face.

"Take my head in your warm arms. I feel cold," she said.

Fright played over Juliette's features. Drawing a shawl from her own shoulders she placed it about Germaine. Brushing the dark disheveled hair from her high brow, she held her head in her arms with the loving care a mother bestows on a sick child.

"Rest, Germaine, you are weary," she said.

"I shall soon be taking the rest which is given to our poor tired souls when they are weary with the struggles of life," replied the sick woman. A smile played about her wan mouth.

"Forgive me, dear, for any trouble I have caused you. I did not mean—" her lips continued to move but the words were lost to Juliette's straining ear.

Nothing disturbed the silence of the sick room.

A bronze clock was ticking off the time musically, on a mantel. But its soft regular beat sounded like a continued discord on Juliette's tired brain.

"You will not have to watch with me much longer, dear Julie," came the faint words. "The lovely daylight is becoming less and less."

She quieted for some minutes and then spoke again:

"Kiss me, my dear; your pure kiss helps my tired soul."

Juliette's feverish lips rested long and lovingly on the lips and the white damp cheeks. She was struggling to give a little of her own life to her dying friend.

"Are we alone?" came the frightened voice of Germaine. "I thought I heard—a sound—from the further—"

"Réné is here with you today," came the quiet answer.

"He has been here some time."

"I want to see him. Tell him to come near me."

Réné's large heavy figure moved slowly across the room fearing to break this awful silence.

His face was twitching, his dark eyes blazed. He stood before her, took her slim hand and smothered it with kisses.

"Is it not good of God to send me to Heaven, with two dear friends praying for me? Juliette—Réné—" she gasped and her voice trailed away into nothingness.

Thus passed out the famous Madame de Stael, who had been so vital a force. Passed out while two dear friends knelt beside her and prayed for her soul's salvation.

Juliette loved Germaine, not so much for her brilliant mind as for her good impulses.

She, more than other friends, knew that Germaine held that the supreme law of life is justice. She opposed Napoleon because she held that he wished to establish a despotism formed on immorality.

While this was going on she had the courage to proclaim the principles of liberty and of dignity, without which the human species can only be a horde of barbarians or a troupe of slaves.

Her glory was her belief in an ideal and she made her self a priestess, willing to protect it at any cost, even exile.

Later at St. Helena, Napoleon appreciated this fact, for he said of the famous woman, "Madame de Stael is a woman with a great talent and a big mind."

Germaine saw Napoleon's downfall before it came.

Later on she wrote to Louis XVIII:

"Everything will conform to your demands, sire. It is for you to command. In your name I hope you will always reign."

In him she saw the generosity, the magnanimity, humanity and the justice and dignity of posterity.

She could hardly wait for the coming of Waterloo with the appearance of the new king.

Napoleon realized when it was too late that he could have made this wonderful woman an asset to his cause.

She would have worked for him, written for him and perhaps adored him had he used any tact and shown a bit of the milk of human kindness.

It was in 1815, after Germaine de Stael's death, when Ballanche came to live with Juliette, that Chateaubriand, then in all the fever of his ambition and glory of power and love, began to play an important part in her life.


He had met her some twelve years before this time.





## Chapter IX

### REUNION OF JULIETTE AND CHATEAUBRIAND

 ABOUT this time Chateaubriand who was in Rome came to some of Juliette's salons. He had only seen her once at the home of Germaine de Stael. But the impression she had made on him was enough for him to want to see her again. The way she looked to him is best depicted from a "Biographie de Madame Recamier" transcribed in an unpublished sketch of Juliette by Chateaubriand (who called her Leonie) and printed in Herriot's "Madame Recamier." He wrote, "Leonie is tall, her figure is charming. Leonie is beautiful. What makes her face so rarely beautiful is the oval line which one sees in Raphael's women alone. It expresses the sweetness, the delicacy and the kindness. The soul and the character of Leonie are noticeable for the same qualities of beauty. But the special feature about her personality is a piquant spirit and a romantic imagination, in contrast with her natural tranquil manner. At times her words are impassioned, while her face is timid and naïve. One finds there a mixture of the virgin and the muse. One falls with love at her feet, and she holds you there, filled with respect."

Chateaubriand was about middle height, a little bent. His face was pallid, and sickly looking. The blue eyes were often cold and half closed when he was resting but shone brightly when he was animated. This was in keeping with his large nose, and the

nostrils gave the expression of sensibility and of energy. His voice was flexible; it was modulated according to the feelings of his soul.

His talent was written in his features. A smile of malice often played about his full lips, and his expression alternated between enthusiasm, impatience and disgust. At times his smile was irresistible.

To understand the big part he played in the life of Juliette Recamier later one must know much about Chateaubriand and his career.

François René was born in a Breton château, and was brought up by a stolid father, who was cold and uninteresting. Reared in the midst of these harsh surroundings, he found his chief comfort in life in the company of his brothers and sisters of whom he had many. He was especially attached to his fourth sister, Lucile, who was delicate and a dreamer. She furnished her youngest brother real companionship. His childhood was spent playing along the seashore.

He finished his elementary studies first at the college of Dol, and then at Rennes. While finishing his studies he showed special aptitude for Latin and French literature and later for mathematics. At Brest he took the examination for Marine guard, though his mother hoped he would devote his life to the ministry.

After the marriage of his two sisters to men of some distinction, he left for Brest. There he spent an unhappy and lonely life. Later he returned to his parents' home at Combours.

Chateaubriand's taste for literature was as marked as was his melancholy disposition. His soul was

burning for adventure and romance and he found little of this in his own home, so he spent much time in the forest and along the shore, filling his soul with the romance it longed for most. If his parents and his brothers and sisters had little appreciation for his genius, his sister Lucile felt that he had a future and she listened to all he told her. Lucile adored her brother, and she told him time and again that he had great genius, and a bright future.

But his daydreaming was broken by a call to military service, where he was to train for a position as army officer. His father broke the news to him in the following words: "My young cavalier, you must give up all this nonsense. Your brother has obtained a position for you, a commission as second under-lieutenant for a regiment at Navarre. I am old and sick. Here are a hundred louis: use them to best advantage. I shall not live a long time. Conduct yourself as a man should and never dishonor the family name."

He embraced his son, kissed him time and again, his tears wetting the cheeks of the young man. Before François René left, his father gave him the family sword which had been used in a number of important engagements.

In 1787 his oldest brother married the daughter of M. de Malesherbes, a scholarly man, who was well acquainted with the writer la Harpe, the poet le Brune, and with many other literary men of the time. This man of culture realized that young Chateaubriand was a youth of promise and did much to encourage him to continue his studies and to write.

He spent 1787-89 in Paris writing both prose and verse. Then he spent some time with his sister Lucile, who was failing in health in Brittany. The thing that stirred him most was the taking of the Bastile, for he was one of the witnesses of this performance. The irony and passion of this act stirred in him great passion for liberty, and he saw that the revolution was going to break.

He was eager to see America for he had been in sympathy with the American revolution and Malesherbes encouraged him to make a long visit to America, seeing all the principal places from Behring Straits to Canada. He embarked at Saint Malo and obtained a letter of introduction to General Washington. He was granted an interview and General Washington invited him to take dinner with him. In 1822, writing of this incident, Chateaubriand says: "I am pleased that his gaze fell on me. I shall feel warmed by it all my life. There is a virtue in enjoying the glance of a great man."

Realizing that this visit would only give him a peep into American life, he saw many of the big cities, and was impressed by the newness of the life and of the art, especially that done by the Indians. He finished with the Yankee and the Canadian in eight months' time, though in his book called *Natchez* he gives the impression that he had spent a lifetime with the American aborigine. His favorite sister Lucile was to be married and he hurried home. But the inspiration of this visit was his romance called *Natchez* and *Atala*. Then he went to England, but he found little pleasure and interest in his visit. At this time his essay on the revolution came from his pen.

While staying at his mother's home he met Mlle. Celeste Buisson de la Vigne, an orphan of seventeen, who lived with her grandfather, chevalier de Saint Louis, ancient commander of the sea at Lorient, retired to Saint Malo. François René was drawn to her because she was fair, slight and unusually attractive. He noticed her light curls that tumbled gracefully over her forehead. She was full of life, capricious, fantastic and a bit spoiled. Her grandfather loved her devotedly and left her a fortune of about \$100,000 and this money made her feel that she could do much as she pleased.

This pretty, adventuresome young girl attracted him, and they became engaged. After a romantic courtship they were married in 1792.

Much as he admired his attractive young wife, it was a foregone conclusion she alone could never hold his interest. Among the first women to be welcomed to his salon were Germaine de Stael, Madame de Krudener, Mme. de Pastoret, the friend of André Chenier, Mme. de Beaumont, the friend of the moralist Joubert. The first one he attacked in open debate was his friend Germaine de Stael. He entered into the discussion with great fervor. She answered him by publishing his name as one of the émigrés. He recognized his debt of gratitude to his generous enemy in a complimentary passage of *Atala* and *Mercury*. His *Atala* met with such immediate success that M. de Fontaines introduced him first to Napoleon's sisters and then to the consul. Even more successful was his *Genius of Christianity*. He was at the coronation of Napoleon, at Notre Dame, and gave his mark of

approval by articles published in the *Moniteur* and *Mercure*. His first romantic venture was with Mme. de Custine, a woman of wealth and charm. She opened her château in 1802, and there he spent much time enjoying her society. She took such an interest in this brilliant writer that his wife finally insisted on her husband returning to Brittany and paying her a visit.

Napoleon took a great interest in this brilliant writer who flattered his vanity, and in 1803 he appointed him as secretary to the embassy at Rome. While performing his duties there he traveled with Mme. de Beaumont and her friend M. Louis Bertin, who had been exiled by Napoleon. Chateaubriand went to Florence and brought them to Rome. This awakened unpleasant feeling, and he left Rome on the 21st of January, 1804, to occupy the post created for him, as minister of France in the Valais. Just as he was ready to accept the post he learned that the Emperor had ordered the death of the Duke of Eng-hien. Indignant at this performance, he told the emperor he did not want the position. In spite of the unpleasant feeling he knew that it would create, he was willing to return to private life. He bought a home at Vallee-aux-Loups in 1807 and there did much of his best writing. His wife was aware that he was gradually turning away from Napoleon and the Imperialist party. She admired Napoleon as he knew and did not want her husband to become disloyal to the party in power.

It was in the Vallee-aux-Loups that Chateaubriand wrote his famous books the *Martyrs*, *l'Itineraire*, and *le Dernier des Abencerages*. His work on the Mar-

tyrs created much hostile debate, lead by Mr. Hoffmann in the *Journal des Debats*. In 1811 he offered himself as an associate of the French Institute to take the place of Chenier. But he had displeased Napoleon who saw to it that Chateaubriand was honored, saying we take the man and not his book. It was in the winter of 1813-1814 that Chateaubriand took an apartment in the Rue de Rivoli. His place was opposite the gardens of the Tuilleries where the Duke of Enghien was shot. Chateaubriand heard his cries and from that time on he turned against Napoleon. This was evident in his article on Bonaparte and the Bourbons.

About this time his cousin was shot as a traitor in the fields at Grenelle. René tried to intercede for him, but with no results. This tragic end only increased his dislike for Napoleon.

It was at the death bed of Germaine de Stael on the 4th of July, 1817, that he met Juliette Recamier a second time. He came to her salon but it was not until 1819, that Chateaubriand commenced his friendship with Juliette that lasted until his death.

During her days in Rome her great friendship was with Canova, the great sculptor. For a time she lived in his home: it was like Aspasia living in the home of Phidias. Determined to immortalize her beauty in marble, he allowed her a corner of his studio where she modeled in clay. He made two busts of her, but she found them unsatisfactory and he tried to change them later. Most of their time was spent at his country homes in Tivoli and at Albano, where his brother wrote her a sonnet daily.

But in Rome she had another ardent lover, the

Prince of Rohan, and he spent much time flattering her eyes and ears. This Prince Leon was sent to Rome by Queen Caroline to ask Juliette to come and console her in her troubles at Naples. It was at a time when Napoleon's power was on the wane. Murat did not wish to go down with him; his wife, Queen Caroline, encouraged her husband in his method. The Queen and the King at Naples flattered Juliette when she came to Naples showing they wished her aid and counsel. They had signed already the secret coalition against Napoleon. When he confessed this much to her, she said, "You are French, sire, you must be faithful to France." Murat opening a window and showing her the English fleet coming into the harbor answered: "Then I am a traitor," threw himself onto a sofa and burst into tears.

While in Rome, then and later, Juliette Recamier and the Duchess of Devonshire became fast friends. High society in Rome, when they saw these two women driving together on the Corso or chatting in one or another's salon used to say it was difficult to decide which of the two was the more beautiful.

Juliette was fond of the lovely duchess because of the sweetness of her manner and genuine sympathy. The duchess had been most attractive when a young girl and she still had marked traces of it. In spite of her slenderness which gave to her person the look of an apparition she had preserved the traces of a delicate and noble regularity. Her eyes were noticeable for their fire. Her body was straight and light and she walked like an empress, and her white complexion finished the harmonious whole.



Her beautiful arms and hands had the whiteness of ivory, and she covered them with bracelets and rings. The grace and distinction of her manners cannot be surpassed. Her youth had not been without trouble and the agitation of her life had left on her appearance a trace of melancholy and something tender.

These two women, the Duchess of Devonshire and Juliette Recamier, veiled carefully, drove to Rome at the fall of a certain day. They went through the crowd which was before the doors of the Palace Farnese, and went into the room where on the catafalque the owner of the palace lay in state. The Duchess of Devonshire in the presence of Juliette Recamier saw again in the stillness of holy death, the face which she had seen every day for twenty years animated with all the beauty and grace which was the character of the cardinal minister. What went on in her soul nobody except Juliette Recamier knew; she fainted in her friend's arms and was taken back to the palace.

Chateaubriand made an explosion in the political world about 1814, by his famous pamphlet of *Bonaparte and the Bourbons*. He entered into his new career, sword in hand as a conquering power and in the first day he embraced the Restoration with all the strength against the one that failed.

This political career from 1814 can be divided into two parts, from the first Somars 1814 until the 6th of June 1824, the time of the pure Royalists. The second period from the 6th of June, 1824, the day of the re-entry of the Ministry until the downfall of the Restoration, the liberal period in open contradiction

with the first period, the period of the Royalists and of the Republicans after July, 1830.

He wrote the following pamphlet on the Emperor. "Napoleon did more to corrupt men and brought more misery into the world in the short period of ten years than all the tyrants of Rome together, from the time of Nero to the last cruel persecution. There was a similar period in France when brigands and thieves reigned.

"He was less abusive in 1814 and he wished to appear less vindictive. He still hoped for much, he hoped for everything and spoke for Louis XVIII in consequence."

The spirit of party was no longer Juliette Recamier's. She had enough repose to welcome into her home all social classes, and apparently seemed to forget that Napoleon had sent her into exile.

Chateaubriand told her then and many times later that she had the power to dispel the gloom of most people. That sorrow which he had inherited from his mother seemed to fade away in her presence. Though she wrote but little she expressed herself with great charm. In talking she also had a power of expressing herself with ease. She showed preference for a fine turn of phrase, knew how to handle difficult situations and often came to the assistance of friends.

While Juliette was reigning as a queen, she was being annoyed by Constant's bon mots to which she gave a cold ear, Ballanche whose pure words received exquisite attention; and Ampère who wrote her wonderful love letters when he or she was away from Paris. Chateaubriand was the only one who objected,

for he was jealous of Juliette's time and attention, besides he and Ampère disagreed on political opinions. But in spite of this feeling, Ampère made it a point to spend much time with Juliette when he was in Paris, and wrote her beautiful love letters when they were separated. The following are a few of the impassioned letters penned by him during the years 1820 and 1826:

"Paris, June 7th, 1822.

"This evening is like a happy dream to me. I am quite intoxicated with it. I try to gather my ideas—I cannot. Happiness which fills my soul makes me feel aroused by passion. I do not feel as though I were to depart tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, during a whole week I will not see the little room so perfumed, I will not see you whom I love so much! Why are there so many things between us, your friends of the past, those of the present and so many ties? Oh, if we were but alone! At least in the middle of so many obstacles there are a few hours of passion given to me, hours of delight and of delicious sadness, a few hours of those moments which throw charm and regret on the whole of life. The more I love you, the more I feel that I must love you.

"My work, my ideal, my sadness all belong to you, because it will be delightful to pronounce your name in my verses, to paint under this name a pure soul, tender and kind, and that beauty which is in your look, in your features, which makes your voice as tender, which makes your smile so lovely, which gives to all your movements, to your arms and to your whole person that charm which only belongs to you. You

have asked me to paint your picture. I have made it without knowing it, in my mind. I left you this evening, I could have stayed longer. Oh, think of me, pity me and come back on Saturday; be pitiful and be kind. J. J. Ampère."

Paris, January 9, 1825.

"Forgive me what I wrote yesterday. Will you not also know my bad thoughts? It is for you to take my defense. But will you abandon me when you are more necessary to me than ever, when you alone can help me?

"Never has my imagination brought forth more lively dreams, and wished so much for a little happiness. My whole soul, which cannot conceive any other thing, is concentrated on this deep wish, love and to be loved, if it were but for one day. It is you who by slow degrees have developed this feeling, which has taken root in me. At the same time, your image is too much in my heart to allow it to fix itself elsewhere. You have done me great wrong. You have given me the need and you have spoiled me. Give me at least all your friendship. J. J. Ampère."

He had studied and thought much in his retreat at Vallée aux Loups near Paris, and in 1809 "The Martyrs," the most finished of his works, had appeared. He said of this book it was the one which he spent most time writing and correcting. It had given him the biggest reputation because of the style and for its wisdom of thought. It was in this small retreat that he had written "l'Itineraire le Dernier des Abencerrages," and had commenced his great Memoires.

This simple home was attractive because of its situation and for a small stream amid beautiful valleys, a little shade and its forests.

It was in 1815, after Germaine's death, when Balanche came to stay with Juliette for a while that Chateaubriand had offered this place for sale in a lottery. France had not taken three tickets and Mathieu de Montmorency, although he was not rich, had bought the little place. It had only a poetical value for the trace which a man of genius leaves in the place he lived in so long. Though it was only a simple cottage, Juliette was glad to rent it from Mathieu de Montmorency. When Germaine de Stael returned from exile, she visited Germaine at the Vallée aux Loups. Mathieu de Montmorency and his lovely daughter, the Duchess of Doudeauville considered it a treat to spend a few days at a time in the company of Juliette.

Speaking of this incident, the daughter of Germaine de Stael, then the Duchess of Broglie, spoke innocently of the life in one of her letters to her mother's best friend, "I can see your little home at the Vallée aux Loups, as the nicest in the world, but when Mathieu's biograph of life of Saints will be written you must agree that this tête-à-tête with the most beautiful woman of her time will make a curious chapter."

But all is pure for the pure says St. Paul and he is right; the world is just, in finally judging pure souls. For as Portmartin says in his *Causeries Littéraires* "Juliette Recamier personified with incomparable grace, reconciliation and alliance between diverse elements of a society dispersed by storms and rebuilt with ruins. Being a bourgeoisie by birth and marriage she saw

dukes, princes and kings at her feet. The Montmorencies and the Lamoignons, the descendants of these great families of knights who were going to inflict punishment by death on the century for equality, were devoted to her.

Royalist by feeling and in her heart, she was faithful in all adversities. She helped the shipwrecked of all régimes and was a tie between the conquered of yesterday and those of the morrow. Placed at the meeting point and under the blow of two centuries of two societies and two worlds, she created to herself by the right of beauty and kindness a kingdom where the blows were made less cruel, where the wounds closed, where temper was always equal, where the sons of the Revolution refreshed themselves and where men of the times became young again."

One can fancy Juliette Recamier, still dressed in one of those white gowns which suited her so well, walking in the midst of lovely scenery, perhaps alone or better still, in company with brilliant men and attractive women, those whom she had charmed, wounded, calmed and healed.

Evening approaches, she is far away from Paris, in Rome or Naples, she is walking out in the Campagna, near the edge of the road. She passes a small plastered cottage, and at the threshold stands an attractive, dark Italian mother holding her bambino wrapped in swaddling clothes, in her arms. A black eyed rosy cheeked girl and a dark, curly headed boy are playing in front of the home. A tired, soiled middle-aged man comes shambling back from the field, the children fly into his arms, and he hastens

along to kiss the wife who is waiting for him. Juliette Recamier sees the meeting of this happy family and tears of joy, mixed with regret, trickle down her face. She knows that this is the only life, happiness and duty, the immortal law of life and the rest is only a passing shadow.

She had this feeling in spite of the fact that she was at her zenith of power and beauty now; it continued to be the last word of French elegance to be invited to her salcn to a reading given by Constant, Ballanche, Ampère and Chateaubriand. Usually the readings were so crowded that the chairs were arranged in circles, the women were seated and the men stood in back of them. Juliette usually sat in the center of the group. Discussing her popularity at that time, Gaudot says, "She attracted without any effort, she talked little, and her movements were slow and natural. Her eyes were lowered usually, and in raising them they looked different because they seemed to be turned away in a seductive manner. She had the spirit of creating conversation more than most women. She spoke little and never condemned, but when she spoke her words penetrated."

Though she traveled a great deal it was largely because of the upheaval in France, or for want of health that she visited the watering places in France or in Italy. Speaking of her travels she said, "I only enjoy it because of the independence it gives me, as I am attracted to the country, not so much for the country as for the solitude it gives me.

"Travel holds me because I know that I have the opportunity to do as I please. Though it attracts

me, still I find this solitude a bore. When one is young nature speaks much to you, for we are all children of disillusionment. At these moments nature becomes colder and less full of meaning. Then solitude hangs heavy on us and we long for conversation."

Chateaubriand did not like to speak much and especially in a loud voice. Juliette Recamier appreciated this fact and never forced him to talk when he wanted to think or write. She knew that he took his pen in hand naturally, but it was only in great moments he wished to speak. Sweetness was lacking in his nature and it was this he looked for and found in Juliette.

Writing to a friend about his visit to Rome, he remarked, "Beautiful women are a common feature in Rome. They are called by their poets the Clolie and the Cornelia; you can well imagine the antique figures of Juno and Minerva coming down from their pedestals and marching about the temples. Pardon all these recollections but it is the tyranny of my memory in seeing the past in the present. This is a part that is miserable. Grace to Juliette Recamier, but grace to her it is the present which illuminates the past."

In response once to a thrust, he answered, "If I can get my demission I hope to come back and spend years in Paris, or I should prefer to live in a faraway corner where I shall no longer be tormented by what people say." But the duchess who made the thrust was persistent enough to answer him. "You have many good qualities, but you are a man, and many



of the little things and affectations make your heart solid in its attachments."

He left Berlin after holding his post but a little while. Speaking of this event in his memoirs d'Outre Tombe, he wrote to Juliette that he hoped to see Mathieu as soon as he returned, but he doubted whether Mathieu would be pleased to see him, for having given up his post so hurriedly. Whether he was in Paris or in Berlin after 1818, he became Juliette's first consideration. He tried her patience much more than had any of her other friends outside of Constant.

It was at this time that Lamartine had been invited by Juliette to read his Meditations. For it was in 1822 that her modest home in the Abbaye became a rendezvous for foreigners, no less than for Frenchmen of genius, having all shades of political and literary opinions. Lamartine says in the *Cour-familier de Litterature*, "I was passing through Paris on my way to Rome and I took the opportunity of going to the Abbaye for I wanted to see the Duchess of Devonshire, the most sympathetic and generous woman towards artists in Europe. An unknown woman was standing at her side, with her arms on the mantel-piece, and she was trying to warm her feet over some dying embers. I had little time to notice as one sees stars shimmering in the night, a high forehead, beige hair, a Greek nose, eyes that were bathed in the blue of the soul, a mouth that drew together a bit when she smiled, cheeks that were neither rosy nor pale, but like velvet seemed to be touched by Autumn air. There was perfect harmony, a harmony born out of character." Marimee was also brought to the Abbaye

by Ampère, but he was sparser in his praise of her. Juliette had given up her attractive home with its lovely gardens in the Rue Anjou and had established herself in the Abbaye au Bois. Her husband's failure made this a necessity. Never was Juliette so popular as she was living on the third floor in this small apartment, overlooking a court. On the windows were placed pots of flowers, while in the court below walked the sisters for their daily airing.

Chateaubriand rose early and wrote mornings. He went every afternoon climbing three flights of stairs to see Juliette. Either he read to her or she to him and at three o'clock the doors were thrown open to her friends. Often the three rooms were so crowded that many famous visitors had to be turned away. This was especially true when writers like Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Balzac or Ballanche read from their unpublished works.

One evening, Monsieur Lafond, a tragic actor of distinguished merit, recited a spiritual address from the pen of Casimir Delavigne to the people of Rouen. The verses were good, full of fervor and spirit and of true poetical feeling, and the manner in which they were spoken by Monsieur Lafond gave them their full effect. The whole scene was indeed striking and beautiful.

A circle of elegant women surrounded the performer. The gentlemen were stationed in groups behind, while the inspired figure of Gerard's Corinne was strongly brought forward from the rest of the picture by a skillful arrangement.

Juliette went to church every morning; her friend, M. Genoude, went with her. M. Chateaubriand never

failed to meet her there. He knelt down to listen to the mass behind the chair of a friend and often forgot his prayer admiring her.

Suddenly a coolness sprang up between Juliette and Chateaubriand. She found his friendship exacting in spite of her admiration for him. He was jealous of the attention she was getting from Ampère, Ballanche, Lamartine and of Mathieu de Montmorency. He decided finally to apply for the embassy at London and received the post in September, 1822.

Again Juliette missed this savant, in spite of his exacting nature, though she struggled hard to get comfort from the personal visits and letters of her admirers.

Hardly a day passed, but he wrote her lengthy letters, telling what he was doing and what he was writing. He made mention of the fact that he had been asked to give a reading for charity. It was a great success, and he also said he was in affluence in the same city where as a boy he had at one time been in actual want.

Ballanche tried to make up this loss by calling on her daily, reading everything he wrote. He also induced her to spend part of her time translating Petrarch. Though this work was started it never was completed.

Ampère spent much time in her company when he was in Paris, and wrote her loving letters when they were separated. The following is one of many:

June 7th, 1822.

“This evening is like a happy dream to me. I am quite intoxicated with it. I try to gather my ideas.

I cannot. Happiness which fills my soul arouses me with passion. I do not feel as though I were to depart tomorrow and that you, too, are leaving the day after tomorrow. During a whole week we shall be separated."

Chateaubriand's ambitions and desire were destroying little by little the sweet serenity Juliette had always known, even in spite of misfortunes and other disappointments. All the calm cheerfulness of her previous life, her peaceful days were troubled greatly by his agitations. Those former pleasant hours were prevented by cabinet councils, the sitting of chambers.

Many years afterwards she told a friend that feeling a sentiment so perfect as that which she had done, filled her whole mind, it finally lost all its charm and dwindled into nothing. She had the feeling that she might not always have the self-control to refrain from reproaching Chateaubriand. This threw a gloom over the past, leaving unpleasant recollections of past quarrels. Juliette left for Italy in November, 1823. She made the poor health of her adopted niece an excuse. Ballanche soon followed her.

Juliette spent much time in Rome, much of the time in the company of the Duchess of Devonshire. She had with her two of her favorite escorts, Ballanche and Ampère, who had gone to Italy ostensibly to write a guide of Italy. Ampère especially was glad that she had rid herself of Chateaubriand's company, for he thought that Chateaubriand got on her nerves and that he was usurping too much of her time.

While in Rome she held salons to which Romans and French people of different political parties were invited.

Speaking of these travels later, she said: "Traveling tired me, but I liked to travel because of the independence it gave me. I liked the service of the sea for the spirit of independence it gave me, but I do not like to place myself under obedience of any kind.

"It is impossible for me to obey," she said. "Therefore, I find that I enjoy traveling alone, and followed my wish. Solitude pleases me, and still it fatigues me, but often life fatigues me. This is a misfortune from which I have suffered all my life. I must suffer because there is no remedy for it. Meditations, enchantment, secret and indescribable charm of soul, how I reveled in these."

It was toward the end of her visit in Rome that Queen Hortense came to the capital with her two sons. Though Juliette had not seen her since the Hundred Days in Paris, a warm friendship sprang up between them again, and Juliette, with her exquisite tact, never mentioned to her the unhappy years she had spent in exile.

The Queen invited her to accompany her to a masked ball at the Torlonia. Both women went dressed alike. This friendship continued to the Queen's death in 1837. When she died she recalled this sweet friendship by leaving Juliette a lace shawl which she wore while in Rome.

During this visit to Rome, Juliette made trips to Florence and to Naples; the charm of Florence and its country delighted her more than had Rome. But her long stay in Rome was not pleasing to Mathieu de Montmorency, who begged her to set a time for her return to Paris. She was not without letters from

Chateaubriand, but most of them were not interesting because they were filled with thoughts concerning his own political gain. It was while she was traveling in Naples that he wrote to her telling that he had been dismissed from the ministry without a word of warning. Chateaubriand told Juliette then by letter, and later he explained that this sudden demission was caused by differing with M. Villele on the question of the electoral rule, and the question of the *conversion of rents*. Chateaubriand was accused, by his silence, of having favored the majority.

In spite of these unfortunate happenings to Chateaubriand, Juliette continued to enjoy her life in Italy, and did not worry too much. While in Naples she had the good fortune of being presented to the Count of Neipperg, and to the Duke of Rohan-Chabot. The one had ascended to the symbol of the eagle, the other to the wearing of the purple. The Duke of Rohan was considered a handsome man, and was most fastidious in his toilet. Later when this pious man was made an abbé, he proved himself to be a man of iron. He had been a chaplain under Napoleon, but he was made a cardinal during the Restoration. He was pale and aesthetic looking and had a sombre way of speaking.

She had the good fortune of meeting many talented painters and sculptors during the time spent in Rome as she had before. Canova was dead, but Thorwaldsen, who was doing much fine work in Rome, took his place. Chateaubriand wished to have some bas reliefs made to illustrate the Martyrs. Juliette gave Thorwaldsen the commission which resulted in many

delightful afternoons spent in his studio by her and her friends. This friendship commenced in 1824 and continued when Chateaubriand took the embassy at Rome in 1828. Among the other social leaders to whom she was presented, was the Duke of Noailles, married to Mlle. de Mortemart, and his young wife, a charming woman whom Juliette met at the French embassy. The Duke of Noailles was the last of her young friends. A number of Russians came to her salon; among this number was a brilliant woman by the name of the Countess of Nesselrode.

Mme. Swetchine who had had a salon at one time in Paris was in Rome. She was the friend of Constant, and had invited him to come to her home and pray with her that Juliette might again take him into her good graces. Charming, and at times brilliant in conversation, she took special delight in conversing with Ballanche on philosophical subjects.


Juliette made a number of sojourns to many points of interest from Rome. She took her niece with her to Trieste; the ladies were accompanied by Juliette's good friend, Ballanche. Her old time friend Mme. Murat had come there to see her. It was after eleven when they arrived, but Juliette was admitted to her bedchamber, where the old time friends chatted until early morning, over fortunate and unfortunate happenings. The next morning the Queen sent her a letter of greeting with a large bouquet of flowers. While Juliette was in Trieste, she presented her niece and her friend Ballanche to the Queen. The Queen was delighted with the charm of the sweet, simple young girl who was being educated under Juliette's careful

supervision. In turn she presented her second daughter, the Princess Louise to them. The villa in which the Queen was living was a suitable setting for her charm and beauty, which she still enjoyed. On the 10th day of May, 1825, Juliette made up her mind to return to Paris, urged by letters from Mathieu de Montmorency and Chateaubriand, and because her niece wanted to see Paris once more.



## Chapter X

### JULIETTE BACK IN PARIS

 JULIETTE returned to her small apartment in the Abbaye, and no sooner was she settled than René Chateaubriand commenced his daily visits without any reference to any unpleasant past feelings. Juliette was delighted at the thought of again being in the midst of her family and friends.

The death of Louis XVIII brought Chateaubriand back to Paris. He announced the coming of Charles X in his pamphlet, "Bonaparte and the Bourbons, 'The king is dead, long live the king.'" Chateaubriand and his wife went to the Coronation of Charles X at Rheims. Being a chevalier, he was present at the ceremony; recognizing this order, the King spoke some friendly words with him.

The coronation ceremony over, René went back to Paris to continue his work and to enjoy his association with Juliette Recamier.

She was living for a short time at the Vallée au Loups, which was now owned by Mathieu de Montmorency. One of his real pleasures consisted in visiting there Juliette who had rented the house. About this time they suggested the name of Mme. Desbords, introduced by M. De Latouche. She was not given the scholarly recognition, but she was offered a living, about one thousand francs.

A moment of honest joy crept into the heart of Juliette, when her adopted daughter was married

to Mr. Leormant, who was made inspector of the Academy of the Beaux Art through the influence of M. le vicomte of de La Rochefoucauld. A few weeks before this happy event, M. Mathieu de Montmorency was honored with the title of the Duke of Bordeaux, in recognition for his high morals and religious views. He commenced his work at once, but on the 24th of March he was seen kneeling prostrate before the tomb of the Saviour. His death followed shortly afterwards. Though the duke had not lived with his wife and daughter for some time, both of them took his death much to heart. Some time later, his wife, realizing that some of the lectures her husband had given at the Abbaye, and his letters annoyed her, she sent them to Juliette.

She built a hospital to her husband's memory and devoted herself to taking care of the sick and needy. At the death of Mathieu de Montmorency, René wrote a prayer to console his friend Juliette.

Though he was always received alone at the Abbaye, Juliette received many visitors in spite of her tiny apartment on the third floor. In this galaxy of visitors was the Duke of Rochefoucauld, Ampère, Benjamin Constant, Delphine Gay and Mlle. Mante, an actress of the Theatre Français.

This cell Juliette occupied seven years. It was in 1826 that she occupied the apartment on the first floor, left vacant by the Marquise of Montmurail. It was here that Lamartine read from his Meditations.

Étienne Delecluze speaking of these reunions at the Abbaye said: "They were not only friends and many acquaintances of Juliette, but there were evenings

when the smartest of Parisian society found access there. They added to the charm of the gathering and to the brilliant conversation. At times music offered the evening's amusement, but more often it addressed itself to the intellectuals and to the men and women of common soul. Here were read the unpublished work of Chateaubriand, of Ampère, of Balzac, the great novelist whose works were still unknown and he read from some of these unpublished works. The lecturers were the Duke of Noailles, known in Rome and in Paris; seated close to Chateaubriand was the son of Ampère. At first Chateaubriand read from the script on which he was now hard at work, the *Memoires d'Outre Tombe*. At times these lectures took on the nature of reunions, but when Juliette planned them they were much more formal."

The great poet did not often read himself; perhaps he feared that his voice would not carry and his soul was filled with such intense emotions. But if one lost certain accents of mystery in not hearing him, it had certain advantages; one followed the lecture as a shadow hiding a traveler through a forest.

On small tables there were books of the most famous men of France of the day elegant in their appearance, and on the fly leaves were written many kinds of tokens of friendship.

One of the writers speaks of these soirees in these words, "The fewest of the salons were held evenings and Chateaubriand did not like to come to them. I only saw him there once, on the following occasions.

"M. de Fresnes had composed some beautiful music; an opera which had for a title *Cymodocee*, the subject

had been taken from Chateaubriand's *Martyrs*, and had been arranged by M. Fitre Chevalier. This harmonious and clever music was executed by artists and made a splendid effect.

"All the connoisseurs and critics were gathered together, the press was invited to take part at the fête. Jules Janin, Theophile Gautier, Eduard Thiery, Fiorentino, Francis Wey, and Leon Gorzlan." The hero of the hour was little in evidence. When some one went near him he commenced to excuse himself for being there at that hour, which was contrary to his usual custom.

After the death of M. Mathieu de Montmorency, M. Chateaubriand wished to soften Juliette Recamier's suffering and he wrote a prayer for him which he gave to Juliette. In this prayer he spoke of her as a miracle of kindness. "I have found in your friend's soul the virtue which I lost. In looking at your divine beauty one feels transported and it robs death of its shadows of gloom."

About this time Mme. de Chateaubriand, always delicate, was excited greatly over the political differences of her husband, and she went to the middle of France for a trip. Chateaubriand remained behind and spent much of his leisure paying daily visits to the Abbaye au Bois. He was getting more liberal in his political views and more daring in his expression. Finally it was decided to send him as minister to Rome, in the place of the Duke de Laval, who had held the position up to then, but was being transferred to Vienna.

Juliette's friends were surprised to learn that Cha-

teaubriand was willing to be separated for any length of time from the Abbaye. Juliette realized that his going would put a damper on her salon, but she wanted to make the best of it. But she urged the Duke de Laval to give him the post, which he did for her sake.

From September, 1828 to May, 1829, her salon was at low ebb, for Juliette was busy receiving letters from him from Rome, and in answering them. In the midst of these trials she suffered another loss, in the passing of her father.

The following are a few of the many letters written during the years 1826-29:

Ampère to Juliette:

"Naples, Thursday 16, 1826.

"I received your second letter from Terracine; it touches me to the bottom of my heart. I think of you and follow you on this road on which you are alone. I follow you like the poor pigeon traveler. Has my brother all he wants, good food, good lodging and best of everything?

J. J. Ampère."

She in turn wrote him the following letter: "I want to think of your excellent father, of his happiness in seeing you again, so I could not find that your absence was absurd. I am delighted with your lecture. Do you not work during this long voyage? You promised me an elegy on Venice. The weather is admirable, the air is sweet and perfumed. I am alone. Goodbye until Saturday."

These letters are interesting for many reasons. They show the spirit of egotism that was mixed with his passion of love as far as Juliette was concerned. His enthusiasm was filled with doubt and she did much to rob him of this pessimism. Except in religion he had little faith. He desired more than he hoped for. Hope is a sentiment composed of sweetness and security. The word hope is seldom seen in his letters, and with that restriction he speaks: "I hope as much as I can hope." Again he says: "I believe that I can nourish myself with hope, but not too much."

"Dieppe, the first of August, 1829.

"It is today that you left and I put you into my thoughts and vows. I listen with impatience news about your trip. I spoke to M. Ballanche this morning about your illustrious father. He has a warm regard for him, and I spoke to him about your future plans.

"We are here in the midst of a world of perfect solitude. I go to bed at nine o'clock, and I get up at six o'clock. I am taking sea baths and they are doing me a world of good. I walk along the sea, and I think and dream of my friends. I sometimes make morning visits and I pass my evenings with Ballanche. This solitude is ideal, and I only need your spirit to change the occasional monotony into varied interest.

"Madame Chateaubriand has gone to Canterets. I received a letter from her. The wisdom and interest she takes in you shows that I have a right to your friendship. Nothing sweeter can be imagined than the letters and the interest you show in me."

Ballanche and Chateaubriand became less friendly at this time. And for two reasons. Ballanche felt that Chateaubriand was somewhat selfish in his interests as far as his friendship with women was concerned. He flattered Juliette because he wished to use her socially. Besides he was opposed to the humor which Chateaubriand put into his article, "*La Monarchie selon la charte*." Balanche was a Royalist at heart but still he was alive to conditions as they should be. He had the feeling that Chateaubriand might get Juliette mixed up unfortunately in political affairs.

During this time, every morning Chateaubriand wrote the fair Juliette a letter, and he went to see her every afternoon. But the political influence he was getting, and the fortunate way he had in worming his way to Juliette's heart did not satisfy him. He knew that Mathieu de Montmorency would do anything in his power to please Juliette, so he used this influence to help him get an embassy, first to Berlin and then to London. Chateaubriand told her that he had been forced to accept this political trust, but he would make it as short as possible. It is said on good authority that Juliette missed René more than she had most of her admirers. At least the following letter written by her rival, the Duchess of Duras, would suggest this: "Dear brother, I wish to speak of you and the affair at the Abbaye au Bois. Friends say that you are coming back in the spring to be near that beautiful woman, and that lady grows pale while waiting. In your absence it was one of your best friends who told me this. It would seem that you

cannot live unless you are chained. Can I believe this? They say that you are going to give up your position so that you can look on her face and into her eyes whenever you like. This will spoil your diplomatic career. Well, do as you like in this matter. I shall at least see you some time."

Juliette in no way considered herself as Mme. Chateaubriand's rival, but rather her good angel and refuge. Mme. de Chateaubriand sought her assistance when her husband was cast down. In spite of a second loss of Juliette's husband's fortune, she was radiant with happiness, and was handsomer than ever, when she first moved to the Abbaye. Solitude and reflection had given her new power of enjoyment; her taste for intellectual society was increased.

Picture her in a small apartment at the Abbaye au Bois, in a large old building in the Rue de Sevres with a courtyard closed on the street by a high iron gate surmounted by a cross of the same metal. Through this gate one sees the square court, and opposite to the entrance to the parlor of the convent. Different staircases ascend from this yard conducting to apartments inhabited by retired ladies. Here every night Mathieu de Montmorency came; the Superior consented that the outside gate which had been closed at eleven should be permitted to remain open till twelve.

Here is a description of the room left by Chateaubriand: "Her bedroom was furnished with a library, a harp and a piano, a portrait of Madame de Stael and a view of Coppet at moonlight. After climbing three flights of stairs, I entered her cell at the



approach of evening. I was delighted, for the windows looked out on the gardens, where the religious ones promenaded evenings. The shadows of an acacia were seen from the windows and the Sevres hills. The sun gilded the picture and entered the open windows. Some of the birds slept in the shutters that were open. I reveled there in the silence and the solitude, so far away from the tumult of the great city.

"But the most precious thing one found there was a friendship which was difficult to distinguish from love."

Chateaubriand to Juliette:

"Paris, Sunday morning, 14th Sept., 1828.

"This is my first letter, it calls you to Rome or brings me back to Paris. Believe me, nothing in life will be able to separate me from you. I will not tell you how much I suffer for I know you suffer, too. Before I come to Rome a month will be past and this month is one less to be separated from you. You may depart earlier than you have decided. If you do not come it will be your fault; for I will love you so much; my letters will call you to come so often. I will beg you to come to me with so much constancy that you will have no reason to leave me alone.

"Think of this that we have to finish our days together, that present which consists of what is left of life to me is a very poor one, but take it, and if I have lost some days I will make the few that are left to me all the better.

"I will write a few lines to you tonight from Fontainebleau, then from Villeneuve, from Dijon, Lau-

sanne, and from the Simplon. Let me have a few lines from you *poste restant* at Milan. I hope to see you again soon. I will prepare a lodging for you and take possession of the ruins of Rome for you. My good angel protect me.

"Ballanche has given me great pleasure, he had seen you; he brought me something from you. Good-bye till this evening. I brighten up again. Write a line to Lausanne there where I shall find your *souvenir* and then at Milan. You must stamp the letters. Hyacinthe will see you. He will bring me tidings from you at Villeneuve."

"Rome, October 27th, 1828.

"Although I did not expect to receive a letter from you yesterday, since I had one by the preceding mail and since you are not prodigal with your letters, I felt very sad in seeing nothing from you.

"I am still in the same disposition; from weariness and solitude I have fallen in visiting and dinner parties. It is now decidedly clear to me that I can no longer bear the life of the world. I never liked it, but my five years of retreat have completed my incapability of social duties. I wonder why I should thus lose time in seeing people with whom I have no ideas in common, why I should give what remains of my life to stupid gossip of ordinary people. And all this why? In order to attain an aim which I do not wish to attain since I have no ambition and that I only aspire to retire.

You see that since even in arts and science I only find objects of sadness and in the world objects of

weariness, I must go back as soon as possible into my den. It is near you that I will find again all that I miss here."

"Rome, Saturday 11 April, 1829.

"We are now in the 11th of April. In a week it will be Easter; in a fortnight I will get my congé and then see you! Everything disappears with that hope—I am no longer sad. I no longer think of ministers or politics. Be again with you, this is all. I would give the rest for a farthing.

"Tomorrow the Holy Week will begin. I will think of all you told me about it. Why are you not here to hear with me those beautiful songs of grief? And then we should walk in the deserts of the Roman campagna now covered with grass and flowers. All the ruins seem to grow younger with the years. I am of the number. My friend Bertin has taken all the good out of the speech. He brought forth the praise given to Cardinal Castiglioni, and four days after you will have heard that this cardinal was the Pope as a reward for his praises. I wait the arrival of the post before I close this letter.

"I have received a good letter from you of the 30th. I regret Rayneval as you do; but we shall not be fortunate enough to have him. I will do what I can for Andryane. I see by the discussion that everybody is against the law. What is all that to me? I will be at the Abbaye-au-Bois in a month or even before.

"There is a portrait of the Pope by Cottreau. It is striking."

“Lyons, Sunday 3 h.  $\frac{1}{2}$  24th of May, 1829.

“Read this date. It is from the town where you were born. You see that we shall find each other again and that I am always right. I send Hyacinthe to bring you this note. Shall I now bring you back with me to Rome or shall you keep me back in Paris? We will see. Today I can only speak of the happiness of seeing you again on Thursday. Besides if they wait for me impatiently I will deceive everybody for I am pleased with nobody. I have hard truths to tell. I will tell them all the better that I request and will nothing. My position is good. I have done a great business. I have made a hard and glorious campaign in a place where everything was entirely quiet. They wished to forget me and that has not been possible.

“My congé which leaves me quite independent and which has been given to me before M. Portalis was minister gives me all the time to choose the party I shall like. Thursday at last. My heart beats at the thought to find you again in your little room. I have a letter from the Queen of Holland for you.

“Thursday! I dare not believe that word! Only a week ago I saw the mountains of Sabine and now I see those of the Bourbonnais! From the Tiber to the Rhone, the Rhone whose shades have been embellished by your gaze! Thursday!”

“Paris, Sunday 19th, July, 1840.

“You are gone. I do not know what to do. Paris is a desert less its beauty. We have taken no resolution, and it is very likely that we shall not take any.

Where you are not all is cold, everything fails—resolutions, decisions. If only I had some work to do; but the memoirs are finished. Do you know what the Duchess of Cumberland wrote to me from Ems? You will not write to me, I will write to you, although I can hardly write one letter. The old cat can no longer show its claws—he retires. I become smaller, my writing diminishes—my ideas fade. There is only one thing left for me—you. Let us keep in mind Italy. Intelligences to whatever opinion they belong are at the service of lies. The sun will not deceive us—she will warm my old years which freeze around me.”

“Boulogne, Nov. 21, 1843.

“I wanted to write to you with my own hand but I am so tired that I am obliged to dictate to Danielo. I leave tomorrow morning at 7 o’clock for England. I have received your excellent letter three days ago. All is well. A deputation from the town came to see me. Good-bye—keep your friendship for me so that I might find it entire at my return. What a lot of things I have to tell you. I saw the Gazette. Thank M. Genoude for me if you see him. Best wishes to my young and old friends.”

To Madame Recamier, 14th May, 1829:

“My departure is fixed for the 16th. The letter of Vienna came this morning announcing that the Duke of Leval has refused the ministry of affairs to strangers. Is it true? If he holds to this first refusal what will happen? God only knows. I hope that everything will be decided before my arrival in

Paris. It seems to me that we have fallen under a paralysis and we only have not the tongue of free speech.

"You will think that I shall combat M. de Laval; I doubt it. I am not disposed to quarrel with any one. I shall arrive in a most pacific temperament, and these men will have to pick a quarrel with me. While I await the opinion of the minister, there is not enough spirit of praise and of flattery for me in these dispatches. The day and the place are not mentioned; all that is announced dryly to me is the nomination of M. de Laval in a rude dispatch, and most stupid at the same time. But to be so sly and so insolent from one post to another, he ought to remember to whom he is addressing himself, and M. Portalis could have averted by a word the answers which I last gave him. It is possible he signed it without having read it, as Carnot signed certain executions of death."

His last thought about Rome:

"The first time I came to Rome it was the end of June. The summer heat had begun driving the crowds out of the city. The strangers have gone and the Romans have locked themselves up in their homes. One no longer encounters pedestrians in the streets. The warm mid-day sun beats down on the Coliseum and nothing stirs, except the lizards that dart out from the grasses. The earth is bare, the sky without any clouds, it seems more like a desert than mere earth. But when night comes the people come out of their homes and Rome lives again. This life is born again out of perfect silence. Around the tombs

there is an air of life and the promenades that have been hidden in shadow are once more lively.

"Yesterday I went at moonlight into the country between the port of Angelique and Mont Marius; there I heard a nightingale, it was singing on a balustrade. In it I heard that sad melody, which is so frequent in Latin poetry. I recognized the refrain of all the birds, and of this lovely symphony none was so lovely as that of the nightingale; he had something veiled in his song, as the sigh of the nightingales in the trees in our woods. All the notes were in a low voice, the strain blended from major to minor. He sang in a half voice, he had the air of wanting to charm the sleep of those dead, wishing to awaken them. In it was heard *la Lydie* of Horace, of *Delia*, of *Tibulle*, of *Corinne*, of *Ovid*, and there only remained the *Nightingale* of *Virgil*. This hymn of love is powerful at this hour. It gives I know not what feeling of passion to this second life. It gives one the feeling that made a young man say to a Greek girl: 'If there only remained the string of my strand of pearls I should divide that with you.'

"If I have the good fortune to spend my last days here I shall arrange to enjoy them at Saint Onuphre and have the room adjoining to where Tasso lived. In moments forgetting all my political work in the window of that cell I shall continue my memoirs. In the loveliest city of the world, in the midst of orange trees and oaks with all Rome in view, every morning I shall set myself to work, between the deathbed and the tomb of the poet, and I shall invoke the genius of glory and of misfortune."

“Rome, Saturday, 3 January, 1829.

“I renew my good wishes to you in the new year, and that God will grant you a long life. Never forget me; I have hopes since you have remembered your friends Mathieu de Montmorency and Madame de Stael so well. Your memory is as good as is your heart.

“I was telling Madame Salvage yesterday that I knew nothing in this world as lovely and noble as you.

“I passed an hour in the company of the Pope yesterday. We spoke of many things; some of these were important and serious. This man is distinguished and brilliant and he is a prince full of dignity. Nothing is lacking in my political life except to have had business relations with a Pope. This completes my career. Do you wish to know my routine with exactness? I rise every morning at five-thirty, and I have my breakfast at seven. At eight o'clock I am busy at work in my cabinet. I either begin the day by writing to you or attending to any business that comes before me for the French people, especially for the poor, and this work is urgent.

“I spend two or three hours daily wandering among the ruins or visit St. Peter's or the Vatican. Sometimes I make a necessary call before or after my walk. I come home at five o'clock, and I dress for the evening. We dine at six o'clock and in the evening we have a soiree at home or are invited out, or I receive a few persons on urgent business.

“I retire at eleven, and sometimes I walk out at this hour in the country, notwithstanding the thieves and



the malaria. What do I do? I listen to the silence, and I enjoy watching my shadow as it passes from door to door, or along the aqueducts lightened by the moon.

"The Romans are so accustomed to my methodical life that I am sure they can map them off by the hours."

"Rome, Thursday, 8th January, 1829.

"I am very unhappy, the loveliest time in the world we have passed in rain, so I have been unable to take promenades. This has been the only happy moment in my day. I have thought of you in this deserted country. There are allied in my sentiments the future and the past. I am making the same promenades, going once or twice a week in the quarters where the English keep themselves. Who remembers today this young woman, Miss Bathurst? Her compatriots gallop along the river without giving her a thought. The Tiber which has seen so many things is no longer embarrassed. Moreover the floods have begun again, they are now turbulent—now pale and tranquil, when they passed this creature so full of life and of beauty.

"..... I must give you an account of my last Tuesday. There was an enormous crowd at the embassy. I was resting with my back placed against a marble table. An English woman whom I did not know approached me and said, looking at me sharply, 'M. Chateaubriand, you are very unhappy.' Astonished by this remark and the manner of her conversation I asked her what she meant to imply. She answered me, 'I tell you that you are

unhappy.' Saying this she crossed her arms and was lost in the crowd, and I did not see her again the remainder of the evening. This strange creature was not young nor pretty. I found her strange because of her mysterious words."

## Chapter XI

### THE TRAGEDIES OF THE CONVENT

"Rome, Tuesday, 13th January, 1829.

"**L**AST evening I wrote you at eight o'clock, the letter that M. de Viviers will bring you; this morning on waking I still wrote to you sending it by a courier who goes at noon. You know the poor women of Saint Denis, they have been abandoned since the arrival of the great women of the Trinité-du-Mont. Without becoming the enemy of the first I ranked with Madame Chateaubriand on the side of the weak. For a month the ladies of St. Denis wanted to give a fête to us, they selected noon as the hour. Imagine, if you will, a theatre arranged as a sacristy, with a tribune. For actors we had a dozen little girls ranging from eight to fourteen, and playing Maccabees. They made their own caps and cloaks. They declaimed their French verses with a fervor and a funny Italian accent. They stamped their feet energetically at times. One was a niece of Pius VII, one Thorwaldsen's daughter, and one was the daughter of Puvis de Chavannes, the painter. They were extremely pretty in their simple paper frocks.

"The one who played the part of the high-priest had a black beard, that was both charming and odd, and she had great difficulty in keeping it in place with her small white hand.

"For our audience we had the mothers of these children and some of the sisters, two or three babes, and some twenty young boarders with white veils.

We brought cake and ice cream from the embassy. They played the piano between the acts. Judging by the joy this fête brought to the convent, pleasant memories will remain. The program was finished by 'Long live for Eternity,' sung by three religious ones in the church."

"Rome, Monday, 23rd February, 1829.

"Yesterday the obsequies of Pope Leo XII came to an end. The pyramid of paper and the four candelabras were beautiful, because they were large and in keeping with the proportions of the theatre. The last requiem was beautiful. It was composed by a man not known to the outside world, who belonged to the Pope's chapel. He seemed to have a genius of another kind than that of Rossini. Today we are passing from sorrow to joy, singing *Veni Creator*, for the opening of the conclave. We are looking forward to the coming event, and the smoke blows in a certain direction. The day when there is no smoke the Pope will be named, and I shall be with you again, that is at the foundation of my work."

#### THE VILLA MEDICIS, THE FÊTES AT ROME

"I have given balls and evenings in London and in Paris. And being a child of another temperament I found that I enjoyed solitude. But I never knew what fêtes in Rome really meant. They have an antique poetry about them which puts death on the opposite side of pleasure.

"At the Villa Medici there were gardens already in bloom and there I received the Grand Duchess

Helene; the setting of the picture was lovely. On one side was the Villa Borghese with the Raphael house. On the other the villa of Monte-Mario and the sides which border the Tiber. Below the spectator was Rome abandoned like a black eagle. Amidst these beauties, the descendants of Paula, and of Cornellee, of Naples, Florence and Milan, the Princess Helene seemed to reign. A storm came down from the mountain suddenly, and destroyed the tent where the festivities were held, and the garlands of flowers, and everything looked like a flooded river. The embassy was in consternation. I do not know what ironic gayety possessed me to see this hurricane that brought me such joy. The evil was repaired promptly; instead of dining on the terrace we dined inside. The harmony of the crashes of the trees and the branches thrown down by the wind, suggested the noise of the American forest. The groups who had been playing outside, and the winds that had played with their hair, presented curious figures, gave a new character to those games that seemed to be mixed with storms, and demand the illusions of the world.

"I have great pleasure in my remembrances of the autumn, when in evenings I saw passing me the women of the spring, who suggest the flowers, the concerts, and the lustre of my successive galleries. These pictures of beauty, of diamonds, of flowers, blend to the sound of Rossini music, which repeat and blend with the orchestration. Are these melodies the suggestions of those songs I heard in the swamps of Florida, or those I heard in the temples at Athens? Is it similar to that sung by the ocean? My sylph is perhaps

hidden in the form of some lovely Italian. My dryad is still wandering over the prairies, where I spoke to her. I am a stranger to the society by which I am now surrounded, and perhaps there comes from this experience a pride which mounts to my head. When I wish to rest I go to St. Peter's or to the Coliseum; then the little dramas of life are forgotten, and in this brusque change of scene there is the sadness of my old days."

As soon as René returned to Paris he hurried to the Abbaye au Bois to see Juliette, and from this moment their friendship unfolded through the years until it developed on his part into a love based on the highest and purest affection.

Her adopted niece was at Toulon superintending her new home while her husband was travelling in Greece. Their absence made a great gap in Juliette's life, and she was glad to have René's company. Juliette comments on his success in Rome, writing to M. Lenormant that the king was delighted with René's work in Rome and wants him to return shortly. His health felt the need of relaxation after his arduous work so he decided to take a cure in the Pyrenees. Before leaving he announced a reading of his last work, *Moïse*. Lafond of the Comédié Française was asked to read it. Juliette gave her salon for this reading. Juliette had moved from the third floor to the first and the rooms were more spacious for this venture. Lafond did not give the time to the preparation of the reading he should and the venture fell flat. This was a great disappointment to Juliette and to Chateaubriand also, for she had invited the haute-monde and

the savants alike and they looked for this event as his crowning literary glory. Chateaubriand went to take the water at Caunterests and she, with her ever faithful friend, Ballanche, went to Dieppe.

During all this time Chateaubriand was opposed to the Polignac ministry; the Prince of Polignac had been given this office by Charles X. Juliette Recamier and some other of Chateaubriand's friends knew how he felt about the Polignacs and feared he might resign from politics altogether. While Chateaubriand was in an upheaval about this affair, the ever faithful and sweet-natured Ballanche was traveling with Juliette, and was finishing his *Palingenesis* and thinking about his next work *Zenobie*. About this time, Merimee, the writer, was eager to enter the political arena and he urged Juliette to exert her influence to get him some political position. The Duke de Laval had lost his embassy in Rome, but through the influence of Chateaubriand he was given the London office, and Juliette hoped that Merimée could get some London post.

During the winter of 1829-30 Juliette came back to Paris. Though the Liberals and the Royalists were always represented in her salon, there were more liberals there than ever before. Her friends attributed this to the influence of Ballanche and Chateaubriand. There were a number of new savants introduced to her salon, among them Quinet—who was writing a book on modern Greece. He had as assistant, Germaine de Stael some years before, when he was translating Herder—and he was delighted with her brilliant mind, but he was delighted with Juliette's charm and beauty,

and especially by the fact that she was willing to pardon his ugliness. Victor Hugo at this moment was producing *Hernani* and some of his early plays, and he took time to visit Juliette's salon. He went one step further and sent her box-stall tickets for the opening night of *Hernani*. Sainte Beuve, suggesting a Roman senator or philosopher with his high sloping forehead and strong Roman nose, was a frequent visitor at the salon and has left some interesting studies of the savants seen there as well as of its charming hostess.

He describes the salons of the time in the following words, "The room into which I was introduced to Madame Recamier was on the first floor. It was large and there were two small rooms adjoining. The light was kept out by two thick curtains, and at times it was quite impossible to distinguish anything when you first entered the rooms. I saw some people when they came in greeting Ballanche, whom they mistook in the darkness for Juliette Recamier. The reception hours were from four to six. Sometimes there were a great many invitations for that hour but then it was for a lecture or music."

Chateaubriand usually made his visit about two in the afternoon, driving or walking to the Abbaye as his strength permitted. He was getting feeble, his hair had become white, and his legs were weak. Ampère when he came back from Rome had not seen him in some time. He was surprised to find such a great change in René and he took his trembling hands. He said that he spoke to him of the eternal city, of the crowds and the coliseum and the bouquet of trees



approaching St. John. In spite of increasing feebleness René recalled clearly the open vista of the country; he recalled everything, his promenades, and many an amusing incident.

No one was allowed between the hours of two and four when Chateaubriand read aloud to Juliette from one or another of his works. The increasing years had not robbed her of any of her beauty, she still had that charming smile and manner, and lovely pink and white complexion. Though she confessed to him and to others she knew that she was no longer beautiful because the street gamins refused even to look at her. She had a defect in her eyes; cataracts were forming over the pupils gradually making her almost blind. She said God was good to her to hide the increasing ugliness of herself from her eyes. During this trying affliction she remained most patient, and though she had several operations, final blindness was sure to be the outcome of her suffering. Occasionally she called on Chateaubriand and other of her friends, but more often they came to her salons.

At four o'clock when she received, the doors were thrown open. Chateaubriand remained when his friends Ballanche or Ampère read from his *Memoirs*, or when he became interested in something Balzac or Victor Hugo had to offer. As Sainte Beuve says, "Those who came usually found the great man sitting on the left side of the mantelpiece and Madame Recamier on the right. A few habitual friends came every day and other visitors dropped in during the afternoon. They spoke in a low voice as if there were some sick person in the room. If a loud word was heard

it came as a surprise as if they would say, 'Which of these badly brought up persons is not worthy of our society?' At these meetings Juliette was always dressed in white, and was comfortably seated in a large armchair."

Mr. Lenormant officiated at many of these meetings and he was a perfect reader. There was nothing Chateaubriand enjoyed more than to have him read from his works. Occasionally Chateaubriand noticed a few tears steal down the cheeks of some of the audience and this was the greatest tribute one could pay his work.

About this time M. Recamier died. When he was taken ill he made the request to be taken to the Abbaye. This wish was granted and Juliette nursed him through his entire sickness. When he died she told her friends, "I had the feeling that I had lost my father for a second time."

While Juliette was at Dieppe many of her friends visited her. Chateaubriand paid her a visit while she was on her holiday. Ballanche and David always constituted a party of two, and the holiday was benefiting Madame Recamier greatly when the news of the events of July reached her. Terrified at what might happen, anxious about her niece, and M. Chateaubriand who had left Dieppe on the 27th, she set out on the following day and arrived at Paris on the 30th.

Her astonishment was great when she found that she was obliged to walk from the Faubourg St. Denis, on foot, accompanied by her maid and Mr. Ampère who came back with her. They walked about three

miles through barricades, some of them eight feet high, unpaved streets, narrow and crooked, full of holes, pushing their way through rough crowds, with men and women standing about idly everywhere. She noticed all the shops were closed and there was not a cart or horse on the street. The young men of the Abbaye took sides with the Liberal Party, but such men as M. Lenormant were not against the Bourbons altogether. As ever, Juliette was arbiter and listened to both sides patiently.

After publishing his pamphlet called "De la Restauration et de la Monarchie elective," Chateaubriand took his wife for a holiday to Switzerland. The letters he wrote from Switzerland to Juliette and to other of his friends were afterwards collected in the 10th volume of *Memoires d'Outre Tombe*. Before the Revolution was over Charles X went into exile and Louis Phillipe was proclaimed King of France. During this time, Juliette received a few letters from her old lover, Prince Augustus, who kept her posted about the political condition in Germany. During these trying days in France, Benjamin Constant passed away. Though Juliette and some of his other friends had not always approved of his methods they respected the man's genius.

Towards the latter part of 1831, Juliette Recamier had a bad cough. Her salon was closed for a while and her friends were concerned about her health. René de Chateaubriand and Ballanche were seen walking constantly in the court of the Abbaye. They did not venture to ring lest she should find out that they were anxious. René with his white, silky hair

blowing about in the cold wintry wind, was the very image of despair and formed a striking picture.

The following notes show how anxious Chateaubriand was during this time:

“November 4th.

“I bring this note to your door. I was so struck with terror when I was not admitted yesterday that I thought you were leaving me. Remember it is I—who want to go first.”

And again:

“Never speak of what will become of me without you. I have not been so wicked in the sight of God that I should survive you. I see with joy that I am ill. I fainted yesterday, which made me weaker. I shall bless God for this, if you will not mind my life is in your hand.”

The doctors ordered her to the south, but she could not be persuaded to leave Chateaubriand alone.

Her delight was great on returning to her former life. He went to her every day at two-thirty and read to Juliette whatever work he was writing. They talked it over together and she gave him her frank advice. None of her guests were then admitted before four. The most regular were the Duke de Laval and Duke Doudeauville, both different examples of the old grand French seigneurs. One day when the Duke de Laval was recapitulating what the revolution in 1830 had cost, he added: “France has spent all this to get rid of this [meaning the nobility] at a cost.” Juliette replied, with an arch look: “Does not France think she paid too dear for it?”

When a new book appeared of any value, it was read and discussed and the author often asked to be presented. *Tête-à-têtes* in a low voice were discouraged altogether. If any of the habitués took this liberty they received a gentle chiding after the other guests were gone.

Juliette always sat on one side of the fireplace, the others round in a circle. Whoever had an observation to make, contributed it to the common stock. If anyone in the circle was suspected of having any special knowledge he was appealed to with an air of deference.

On one occasion, one of the ladies complained to another of having lost the thread of the discourse and the comment was made to Juliette that no doubt this came from timidity. "When people are too timid," she answered, "to speak up, they should be modest enough to listen."

Another characteristic of this salon was the aim to keep to one subject. After Juliette Recamier moved into the more spacious apartment known as the cellule, she held musicales once a week. On one occasion, Rachel, the great tragedian, recited a part of *Esther* for charity.

Jean Jacques Ampère was the life of the Abbaye and largely on account of his wit. He was the most entertaining, the most courted man, whom every brilliant woman was glad to have in her salon.

The Duke de Noailles and Balzac had now become constant habitués of her salon—but George Sand made the bold statement that she had never accepted any invitations to the Abbaye. Sainte Beuve speaking of the salon in her later years, said: "What she did

one day in her salon she accomplished day after day. In her cellule she thought of everyone, and she gave everyone the sympathy needed, she sacrificed none but herself. Never a talent, a virtue was lost; she recognized every distinction; she was willing to recognize every merit, and bring it to light. She desired to place everyone in his right relation therefore creating a perfect harmony about her, and thus subordinated them to her." She surely had her ambitions, but they were worthy ones, especially when men and women of genius were concerned. She was willing to give her time and attention to the most obscure. It was her nature to be at one and the same time universal and very particular and she attracted all and still had the privilege of choosing.

Her choice was unique, for Chateaubriand was her choice for the last twenty years; he was the center of the world; the great interest in her last years. And still she never sacrificed, only subordinated others to him. Chateaubriand had his antipathies, his aversions and even his bitterness; all this is stated plainly in his *Memoires d'Outre Tombe*. She tempered all this, and corrected small faults in others. She was ingenious in getting others to speak when he wished to be silent. She had kind things said to him, and to others: one of her ambitions was to give refreshing praise to others. She justified herself in the words of Bernadin de St. Pierre: "In this woman there was a natural gayety, which dissipates men's sadness. She played the part of a sister of charity of their faults, their weakness and their failings."

Juliette wrote little, though the great men of her

time knew that she expressed herself easily and well both in writing and in speaking. She had a natural charm, and a keen sense of humor that made her conversation worth while. Better still she was a delightful listener. She questioned everything with interest, and listened to all explanations with unusual intelligence, caused by harmonious surroundings.

“Wednesday, 18th May, 1831.

“I spent my day yesterday wandering on the border of the Rhone. I looked at the city, the place where you were born. The hill where stood the convent where you had been chosen as the most beautiful of women, a hope which you have not brought to disappointment, and you are not here, and the years have passed, and you were exiled in your youth, and Madame de Stael is dead, and I leave France.

“From these ancient times a singular person has appeared to me. I send you his note because of the surprise it caused me. This person whom I have never seen plants pines in the mountains of the county of Lyons.

“A neighbor in your country, who has no other title to offer you but one of deep admiration, desires the honor of seeing you and presenting his homage and respect. This neighbor is called Ellevion.”

From Geneva on the 18th of June, he wrote the following letter:

“You have received all my letters. I am waiting impatiently for some word from you. I am positive that no answer is coming, but still am disappointed when I get the journals. No one in this world except

you is interested in me, and this is a real delight. I love your solitary letters which I do not get as I did at the time of my splendour, in the midst of parcels, dispatches and all these letters of affection, admiration, sycophancy which disappears with fortune. After your short letters you will come to me if I do not decide to come to you.

"You will be the one to sell my small estate. The price of the amount will enable you to travel to warmer climates.

"The weather is splendid just now. In writing to you I see Mont Blanc in all its splendours where one can see the Apennines. It seems that I shall only have three steps to make to reach Rome, where we will go when everything is arranged in France. Our glorious country, after having passed through all its misery, only lacked this bad government which it now has and our youth will be buried in dogma, literature and debauchery as it will adapt itself to individuals. There is only one chapter left to me now, that of accidents. But when persons linger as I do on the way of life, the more probable accident is that of the end of the journey.

"I do not work, I can do nothing. I am tired. It is my nature to be thus and I am like a fish out of water."

Réné and his wife made an extensive trip through Switzerland in September of 1832. He went from Lucerne to Constant, Zurich and Winterthur. There he recalled Lavater, Geissler and that Napoleon and his captains came with Russian prisoners through there on the way to Paris.



The cholera was spreading through France rapidly. Juliette Recamier had the superstition that she might be seized with cholera. She spent some time with the Queen of Holland at her lovely château built by her on a high rock. The Duchess of Saint Leu and her son, Louis Napoleon, were lovely to Juliette. Before leaving she visited René and his wife.

Chateaubriand tells of one of these visits in the fifth volume of his *Memoires* in these words: "In the valley, near Lake Constance, our holiday was gay. It was as if a wedding feast was going on. We disembarked at the end of the lake, and traversed the neck of the Rhone where the river flowed through the valley as through a park.

"We walked about through the park and seated ourselves on a bench near the river. From the pavilion we heard the strains of a harp and we commenced to listen. It sounded like a fairy story. I read to Juliette my description of Saint Gothard and she begged me to write something on the tablet. Already I had a suggestion from J. J. Rousseau. What I hoped to find on the Lake of Lucerne I have found on the Lake of Constance, charm and intelligence of beauty.

"I do not wish to die as did Rousseau. I wish to live a long time yet, and to enjoy the sunshine of the place. To spend my last days at your feet, and to listen to the music of these waters.

Chateaubriand."

After her visit with Chateaubriand, Juliette went back through Wolfsberg and Berne. She stopped at

Coppet to visit Germaine de Stael's resting place and that of her child and of her parents. Juliette was the only one permitted to visit the private vault. Just as René afterwards gathered his Swiss travels into a volume of his memoirs, Juliette Recamier has narrated the pleasure of this trip in letters which were written to J. J. Ampère and to Ballanche. She loved all Switzerland and found Lugano a perfect fairyland.

Juliette returned to Paris first and Chateaubriand soon followed. They were all happy with their lovely associations of their holiday when René was arrested as a suspect for being friends with Madame du Barry, who was also held.

He narrates this incident in this letter:

"Paris, Street Inferno, the end of July, 1832.

"One of my old friends, M. Frisell, an Englishman, lost at Passy his only daughter, a girl of 17. On the 19th of June I went to her burial. The pretty Elisa was having her portrait painted when she was snatched away from her parent. Coming back in solitude to the street Inferno I was filled with memories of that charming young girl. I was awakened at four in the morning. Baptiste, my servant, told me that policemen had been placed at my doors and in the courtyard. As he spoke these words, three men came in with words of explanation. They explained that I was to be put under arrest by the order of the Prefect of Police. I asked them if it was sunrise and if they brought a legal document. They refused to discuss the sunrise, but presented papers for my arrest."

Finally, Madame du Barry and Chateaubriand were acquitted from any intrigues.

Once more Juliette Recamier's weekly salon was thrown open to the reading of Chateaubriand's *Memoire d'Outre Tombe*. Though she was not feeling strong, and complained a great deal about her sight she was still lovely to look at. The pinkish bloom was no longer on her cheeks, but her complexion was still that pearly white. The lustre was gone from her eyes, but more than ever her petaled lips had that smile born of the milk of human kindness.

Chateaubriand's square figure was shrinking with age. His blue eyes were still cold, especially in repose. But they were filled with animation when he was interested. His nostrils, wide and strong, gave a look of strength to his face. His voice was soft and rythmical. It was this mellowness and brilliancy of coloring in his voice that made him a poet and a magician.

Chateaubriand was now hard at work on his life memoirs, later published in ten volumes. The reading of this important work commenced at the Abbaye in 1834. Most of the literary men and women in Paris at the time, considered this work favorably. It was not all read at one time, but was scattered during the next few years.

The description about the trip into Switzerland was one of the chapters that won great applause.

"Alps lower your head. I am no longer worthy of you. To make the most of you I should be young, but I am old and solitary. I can yet describe you but to what purpose? Who would be interested in these word pictures? What other arms excepting those of time will rally to me, and embrace my genius with bared head? Who would repeat my songs? What

muse would I inspire? Under the dome of my years and under those snow covered mountains which surround me. Not a single sunbeam will come to warm me. What a pity to linger on the mountains with tired steps which no one would care to follow. What a misfortune that I should only be able to linger again at the end of my life."

2 o'clock.

"My boat stopped before the landing of a house on the right bank of the lake before the Bay of Uri. I went up through the garden of this inn, and sat down under two walnut trees, that shelter a stable. Before me, a little on the right, on the opposite bank of the lake, could be seen the village of Switz, among the gardens and the plains used for pasturage, called Alps in this country. It was surmounted by broken rocks in a semi-circle whose two peaks, called the Mythen and the Haken, the mitre and the cross, thus called because of their form. These rough prints rest on the base of the rock, as the crown of rough Helvetian independence rests on the head of the shepherd people.

"The silence about me was interrupted by the sounds of the bells on two cows, which were left in the next fold. They seemed to sound the glory of pastoral liberty with which Switzerland gave with her name to a whole people. A small canton in the neighborhood of Naples, called Italia has likewise, but with less sacred meaning given its name to the whole Roman territory."

3 o'clock.

"We enter the gulf or lake of Uri. The mountains are steeper and become sombre. Here appears the

grassy group of Grutti where Furst an des Halden and Stauffaches took the oath to deliver their country. Here at the feet of Achsenberg is the Chapel which marks the spot where Tell, jumping out of Gessler's boat, pushed it back into the waves.

"But did Tell and his companions ever live? Are they perhaps only myths of the Nord, born of the songs of the Scaldes and whose heroic traditions are found on the banks of Sweden? Are the Swiss of today the same as they were at the time of their struggle for independence? Do I myself believe that Tell and his companions climbed from rock to rock in the paths that had been made by wolves?

"Very fortunately a thunderstorm overtook me. We took shelter under a cove at a short distance from Tell's chapel; it is always the same God who raises the winds and the confidence in the same God that gives courage to men. In other times crossing the ocean, the lakes of America, the seas of Greece and of Syria I wrote on a damp paper. The clouds, the waves, the rolling of the thunder ally themselves and are making nobler remembrance of that ancient liberty of the Alps than the voice of that effeminate and degenerate nature which my century has given to me.

"Stopping at Fluelen, I arrived at Altdorf, but lacking horses I had to stay over night at the foot of Bannberg. Here William Tell shot the apple from his son's head. The stretch of the bow was at the distance which separates the two fountains. Let us believe it, and let us have faith in religion and liberty the two great things man owns, for glory and power are dazzling, not great.

"Tomorrow, from the height of St. Gothard, I shall salute the new Italy as I have saluted it from the summit of the Simplon and Mt. Cenis. But what good is it to me to cast a glance on the regions of the sunshine and aurora?

"The pine of the North cannot descend among the oranges that one sees at the foot in the flowering valleys."

Most of the letters which René had written to Juliette while in Rome were collected and put in Part III of his *Memoires*. These *Memoires* met with that success which Chateaubriand had hoped for his *Moise*. The *Memoire* on the Imprisonment of Madame du Barry appeared about this time, and was welcomed with praise.

During the same year Chateaubriand made a trip to Italy, but Juliette Recamier kept her salon open, with musicales, readings for charity. During Chateaubriand's absence, Ampère was the life of the salon. His wit kept the ladies laughing. One of the most brilliant evenings took place when Rachel, the great actress, recited part of Queen Esther for charity.

Delecluze was another one of the literary men who was fortunate in being able to use her salon for some readings. He was publishing "*David, son ecole et son temps*," and read the first few of the chapters there. St. Beuve was writing a biographical notice of the Academy. He now became a regular visitor at the Abbaye.

When Chateaubriand was not entertaining Juliette Recamier's guests reading from his *memoires*, Lamartine often went to the Abbaye and read from his

Meditations. Among the guests who listened to Lamartine were le duc de Noailles, J. J. Ampère, Victor Hugo, Charles Lenormand, Ozanam, Eugene Delacroix and Charles Lenormant.

St. Beuve says of Lamartine's visit, "The other day I was at Madame Recamier's, and with her usual custom she spoke the first word. 'I have had the pleasure of reading your works, so has M. Chateaubriand and he is delighted with it.' But Chateaubriand was determined to remain silent, he never said a word. He put his handkerchief to his mouth and held it between his teeth as was his custom when he did not wish to speak. Juliette went on to compliment him on his style. This style was what I gave most thought to, he said. After some moments conversation on that point, he got up to leave, amused by Chateaubriand's attitude."

Another time, Madame Recamier spoke about animal magnetism, on catalepsy and somnambulism. There were some wonderful examples being cited when Chateaubriand said: "I am always anxious to get experiences along this line, but I have never been able. I guess that I must be of coarse fibre." Then he went on to say that he tried to believe in God and in Christianity until the devil put him into real doubt.

While working on his ten volumes of his memoirs and reading from them at one time and another, he brought out his Essay on English Literature, his History of the Congress of Verona, and one of his great successes, the translation of Milton. He wrote to Ballanche in 1836 that he spent much of his time walking about the boulevards, deep in thought

and spending some two or three hours every day at the Abbaye.

His wife was ill and away from Paris for her health, so René went to live at the Infirmary of Marie Therese, a cloister.

During 1839 Juliette kept her salon open, largely for the readings given by Chateaubriand and St. Beuve, who was now a frequent visitor and often he read from his works, especially from the literary history of France before the 12th Century and also from his work on Ampère. But during the early part of 1840 she had trouble with her throat and went to Ems for treatment. She felt the absence of friends greatly, for Madame Lenormant was in the country with her children, Ballanche, who was not well, was visiting the Countess d'Hautefeuille, while Chateaubriand was the only one who remained in Paris. But Juliette was happy to be able to go back to Paris after Ballanche returned, for she had missed his society very much. She was delighted when her lifelong friend offered himself as an Academician and was accepted. He was growing old, and feeble, and his charming nature was delighted with this recognition of his scholarship.

Ampère went traveling for his holidays, and Chateaubriand went to the Pyrenees to take a cure. On his way back he visited the great Château of Chambord and wrote to Juliette Recamier that he was delighted with the genius of Francois I in the building of the castle. Then he made a trip to London to visit a friend. His letters from there were friendly and showed that he missed her. A sudden coolness seemed



to have sprung up between Mme. Chateaubriand and Juliette Recamier. Juliette was shocked to receive news of the death of Prince Augustus of Prussia. It was the first gap in her circle of friends other than that of Germaine de Stael. He left her one of his portraits by Gerard and two handsome bronze pieces he had in his study, and two portraits of herself that she had given him.

The great Humboldt, who was in love with her when a child, renewed this friendship by writing her many letters. Chateaubriand came back to Paris paralyzed by gout and his visits to the Abbaye were interrupted.

The crowd that came to the Abbaye au Bois after 1834 was unusually brilliant. Besides her intimate friends who came to the end there was St. Beuve, Merimee, Balzac, Victor Hugo, the dramatist, Ingres, the artist, Rossini, the composer, and Gerard, the painter.

Mme. de Tesse said of her: "If I were a king I would order her to speak to me always. I would have said to her, 'Look at me always'." She had above all else a coquettish amiability which is woman's decoration. An evening spent at the Abbaye was more for an actress than ten years spent studying at the conservatoire.

While Chateaubriand was traveling, making a long visit to his friend, the Comte of Chambord, and Ampère had left a big gap in the salon by his trip to Egypt, Sainte Beuve, the brilliant writer, took the center of the stage, reading a chapter on Benjamin Constant who had for years before he died, been the friend of Germaine de Stael and Juliette Recamier.

Sainte Beuve's critical study of Benjamin Constant was received with great interest and approval. He concluded it in some such words as these: "He took a noble attitude of a tribune, of a spiritual writer on religious subject, he stood for the civil and political rights of man, and he fought for humanity with a pen that was fine and in eloquent words. But his opinions were lacking in a certain established consideration, a certain moral consistency, because he was less serious in his attitude than were many men, who were less brilliant and earnest. He spent his life in liberal politics without estimating men, and professed being religious without having faith; he was filled with emotions rather than with any one great passion at any one time. He saw the humorous side in the most serious moments; the vaudeville and the parody were always in his mind's eye in creating a great work. He often said that truth is complete only when one sees the other side of the question."

Among his pen portraits was one of Juliette Recamier, in which he said, "She possessed real charm, which by its presence softened and calmed her friends, giving to others sweetness and graciousness. She softened them a little, and brought out the best in them."

It was in her salon that courtesy prevailed, but also real charity. There were certain things she did not wish to see and they did not exist for her. There was no thought of evil in her mind, for she could not think in those terms. Innocence remained in her soul, she guarded it jealously from childhood. Is this anything to her discredit? Perhaps there was another strain in her life, a feeling of kindness which was often lacking

in others. I have heard people ask if she had mentality. It seems to me that we can take that for granted. She did not have that mentality that burns for itself, but which feels and shows the mental value of others.

She wrote little, she made a point of this from the time she was a child. But when she did write she expressed herself with great ease. In speaking, she also had felicity of expression. In narrating anything she preferred a delicate expression, an amiable word, and neglected the rest, always showing good taste.

She listened with ears alert, and never let anything worth while pass without the right consideration. She questioned with interest and was frank in her reply. It was only a smile or silence that showed she lacked interest in a problem.

Since 1839, Juliette Recamier had been suffering with her eyes: cataracts were forming over both of them. The physicians felt at first perhaps they might be treated without an operation. Little by little they grew so weak that she left Paris for a while and visited her adopted daughter, Mme. Lenormant, and her children in the country.

So as not to disturb the readings at the Abbaye she finally rented a house at Auteil. The modest home was next door to Gerard, the painter's home, but was occupied by M. Guizot, the famous historian. Juliette was on friendly relations with the family and received a great deal of pleasure entertaining herself with his children.

Chateaubriand went to the country to visit her and other of his friends and continued his readings from

the Memoires. When not busy with the members of her academy, Juliette drove through the country in a carriage, often busying herself with charity. All through her life the suffering of the poor were as close to heart as were the ambitions of the rich.

By the time Juliette returned to Paris, Chateaubriand had returned from his visits to the exiled King Charles X and to the Comte de Chambord. A charming incident occurred at the Abbaye about this time. A great picture of St. Augustine was exhibited at the salon. Juliette was unable to visit it because of her enfeebled sight, so the artist sent it up to the Abbaye that Chateaubriand and she could enjoy it leisurely. Her sight was failing so fast that her adopted daughter insisted on her taking a small house near her and Chateaubriand came whenever his health permitted, as he had done at the Abbaye.

Ballanche was back in Paris and dined with her every evening. He still looked at her in the light of a young brother. M. Ampère took an apartment at Passy and his good humor did much to tone her up.

Chateaubriand's health was weakening rapidly, and he was much more worried about Juliette's eyes, as this letter shows:

"I want to see you more than you wish to see me. I shall soon leave this earth. It is time I should make use of my last moments. These moments are yours and I should love to give them to you. But what good can there be in your seeing a man who has only a short time left. But these moments are yours as long as they last. As long as my heart beats you can count on their being yours. I hope that you were

too much afraid and that tomorrow you will tell me that you are on the way and that you come back to me. Goodbye, let me see you soon. Best wishes to your niece and to M. Lenormant."

In the autumn of 1846 Juliette had an operation on her eyes at Passy, but with poor results. Chateaubriand's soul was filled with sorrow when he heard this. He himself was in a bad way worrying about his wife's health. René had been taken with paralysis due to his gouty condition, and he had little use of his hands and legs.

The first vacancy came with the death of Chateaubriand's wife. René in spite of his apparent indifference, took this loss to heart. He was more devoted to her than his friends ever imagined and she responded to this affection by devoting herself to charity.

Chateaubriand, feeble and broken-hearted, sought comfort by visiting Juliette nearly every day. It was with effort that his stooped, weakened body, paralyzed, mounted the stairs aided by his servant. Once seated comfortably in a chair, he spent two or three hours reading to Juliette, narrating happenings of the Academy or reading something from his pen.

There were seldom any gatherings in her rooms now because of her dimmed eyes—instead of the deep voices of learned men, the happy, youthful voices of children playing in the court came into her rooms.

But the first real loss that came to the intimates of the Abbaye, was with the passing of dear Ballanche; this man, whose mind was kindled by imagination and whose heart throbbed to the beat of true love. His prayer had been answered, for time and again he asked

that his soul be consecrated to eternity before that of his friend Juliette. His soul passed out as his eyes were fixed so he could peer over to the window of the Abbaye. He was at peace with his Maker to the end, as his serene countenance showed.

To him might be applied those words written by Machiavelli on Peter Toderini's epitaph: "Go into the heaven of little children. We followed his coffin as that of a virgin with a white shroud. His was a virginal soul. He had but loved Beatrice, and Beatrice had stayed on earth to weep over him."

When Juliette was told that his end was near, she left her apartment and, in spite of warnings from her doctor, she hurried to his bedside, and remained with him to the end. When the end came, and for months after, she wept so bitterly that all hope for recovery of her sight was gone. She showed her affection for him by making room for him in her own vault.

A few months later she had another operation on her eyes, but with no results. Juliette had paid him a compliment shortly before he passed on, by letting him draw up a will for her. Though another more legal will was made later it was practically copied after the one he wrote for her. He had been working on one of his great works, *Palingenesis*, when the end came, and the responsibility came to Juliette Recamier to arrange this book for him. About this time, René Chateaubriand grew exceedingly feeble. He visited Juliette whenever it was possible, but rarely stayed to any of the salon meetings. He spoke to few persons, and seemed to have considerable difficulty in recognizing his friends, whom he often miscalled.

There were times when he sat next to friends without saying a word. When some speaker had addressed the audience for some fifteen or twenty minutes, René glanced up as though he had been speaking. Then listened and smiled when one of his friends entered.

One day when he visited Juliette alone he begged her to marry him. He knew he was old and decrepit, but as he explained, it was one way of his showing the love he had felt for her all the years when his lips were silenced. She had done so much for his literary attainments that he wanted her to share his glory with him.

Juliette pale, and tired with suffering caused by those weakened eyes burned by tears smiled, "I thank you for the honour you are offering me, René," she said, "but it would mean that I should have to leave this place grown dear to me with associations where I want to spend my last days. Besides, it would interfere with your will, and the people who need your fortune more than I do."

He had asked her to help edit the last of the *Memoires* by having them read, and begged her to be with him when his end should come as she had been with Balanche.

About March, René was taken with a bad cold that kept him indoors. Sometimes some of his men friends and she went to his rooms where a half dozen would listen to some one read from the last part of his *memoires*.

The cannon and thunder of June made it dangerous for women to appear on the street. Fortunately, there were two unfrequented back streets by which

she persisted the coachman should drive. Since her blindness, Juliette was unable to walk in the streets and as the coaches were in danger of being taken and piled up for barricades, it was not easy to get the drivers out. But her beauty and charming manner usually persuaded them to venture with her. Once seated in his modest quarters at the Infirmerie de St. Therese she sometimes whispered to somebody seated near her: "How does he look? What expression has he? Does he seem to be in pain? Does he ever smile?" Had they answered truly, they should have said that he was pale looking, and his lips trembled as though he wanted to speak. At times his gaze was vacant and at other times he seemed to be more interested in what was being read and in his friends around him. At times his eyes rested on the crucifix that hung on the wall or at the beautiful picture of Raphael's "Holy Family." The room was furnished barely with a few odd pieces of furniture and none too many books. One case contained the manuscripts of his Memoires on which he was still engaged.

However absent minded he was, he knew Juliette by her step and her thin outstretched arms which helped to guide her into his cell. These readings were limited to the following guests: Ampère, Noailles, Lemonie and Juliette.

All this time cannonading was going on in Paris; it was only after the Republic was established that M. Lemoine broke the news to Chateaubriand that France was no longer under a monarchy.

Towards the first of April, René was weak, his life was ebbing little by little. As his end drew near,



Juliette Recamier was ill, suffering from catarrh. But she went to stay with her friends so she could be with René as she had promised when his end came. She was at his bedside to the end. Occasionally she left the room overcome with grief, and at these moments his eyes followed her as a child's eyes often follow its parents—wondering when she will return. His soul passed out on the 4th of July, and his funeral at Paris was attended by Louis de Chateaubriand, his nephew, l'abbé Deguerry, a Sister of Charity and Juliette Recamier. But he was buried at St. Malo, under a rock called the great Be. It was in this vicinity that part of his boyhood had been spent and he wished to rest there in peace.

On high tide it forms an island and at low tide one can walk on the sand at the foot of the granite tomb where there is a cross that points heavenward.

The honor to his great literary name was given here, in the midst of many friends. Ampère, who had been one of his loyal friends, spoke at his funeral.

Juliette Recamier took this loss hard, and grieved as she had done for her mother, for Germaine de Stael and for Ballanche. But she consoled herself in the happy thought that she could suffer for them instead of having them suffer for her. In spite of her grief and her failing strength, his Memoires were read to her daily, so they could be arranged for the ten volumes of his Memoires d'outre Tombe and have then placed as he wished them.

This was a wish he had expressed and she was complying to his request. Sainte Beuve, speaking of this task says: "It was she who was as responsible for his

writing of these *Memoires* as for their organization and appearance. It was for this reason that she organized her salon during the last period of her life. It was here the literary and fashionable world came to her to have them read from time to time. Where the intellectual *élite* were admitted to enjoy the privilege of hearing them read, there these writings were met with flattering praise. It was in her simple cell of the *Abbaye au Bois* that a great many saw a great man's work grow from day to day, while he grew feeble, consoled in the thought of future glory.

He commenced these *Memoires* in 1811 and it took some thirty years for their completion.

There are many of Chateaubriand's masterpieces that are well known and read outside of France today. In this number are *Atala*, *Le Genie du Christianisme* and *les Memoires d'Outre Tombe*. There are those who hold that his masterpiece is *C'est la Guerre d'Espagne*. Sainte Beuve says that in spite of his not being a great poet and romancer he was one of the greatest literary men of the century.

M. Faguet, one of the foremost of French literary critics of today says, "The name of Chateaubriand stands foremost since the time of *La Pleiade*. His influence made a new literary school that lasted for three generations. His influence is alive and will continue for a long time to come. His sincere conception of Christianity has had a marked influence on modern religious thought. He belongs to that illustrious galaxy of men represented by Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Alfred de Vigny, Alfred de Musset in the drama. While in history and in the philosophy of history he

belongs to that rank represented by Ballanche, M. de Barante, Augustin and Amedee Thierry, and Michelet. While one finds marked influences of his work in that of Charles Nodier, Emile Souvestre, George Sand, in Gustave Flaubert and in Mme. Augustus Craven."

Whatever be the final estimate put on Chateaubriand's works, historians will surely be agreed finally that Juliette Recamier did more to inspire him to do his best work than any other person he knew; her salon, her time and her criticism was always at his disposal, while she did much in the editing and reading of proofs on his *Memoires*.

When the *Memoires* were published finally, great discussions took place by different members of her family, that of Germaine de Stael and of Chateaubriand himself as to what should be published and what should be omitted. Chateaubriand had demanded that in the publishing of his *Memoires* the copy bearing the date February 2, 1845, should be used. This is now called the *Champion* copy.

After devoting herself to the editing of these ten books, Juliette closed her doors at the Abbaye and her salon became a thing of the past.

Juliette devoted much time to reading, visiting her adopted daughter and enjoying the company of her children. Towards spring in 1849, cholera once more appeared in the neighborhood of the Abbaye, and it soon began to rage. She, who now as always, had a great dread of this awful disease, spent the Easter holidays with her adopted daughter. Speaking of this visit, her niece says in her "*Souvenir et Correspondence*": "Nobody ever entered the life of a family, and

into their intimate habits, with such charm, and perfect sweetness, with so much liberty. The regularity which she used in the employment of her own time facilitated singularly their life. Obligated to make use of other eyes than her own, to satisfy her delight for reading, she arranged this pleasure to suit the reader."

When she thought she was tiring somebody else she was more anxious than if she was wearied. The embarrassment in which she was plunged never made her lose her vivacity, and the interest she took in her friends. She never lost interest in others and her own grief was concealed by her sympathy. She was much interested as to whom should succeed Ballanche at the Academy. When the place was offered to M. Vatout, who died shortly after, it then went to M. de Saint Priest. Juliette was glad to know that he was offered it finally for she knew him well in Rome in the early days of the 19th Century, and M. de Saint Priest had later called on her at the National Library, where Juliette was taken while the cholera was raging in her neighborhood. On the 7th of May, Saint Priest made his speech at the Academie and Juliette was delighted with the welcome he received. The same day Juliette took a drive in the neighborhood of her old home. Her old friend Ozanam, who had often been invited to her salon called with his wife and wanted an apartment in the Abbaye as soon as one was vacant. The same evening she dined with her adopted daughter, and Ampère spent the evening with them. Her oldest niece was reading from the *Memoires de Mme. de Motteville*. Before the reading was over, Juliette Recamier was taken with strange

pains. Returning home to the National Library, she soon quieted down and asked to be alone for a while with her niece. Apparently calm, she knew that the end was drawing near.

The attending physician recognized the symptoms as cholera, and before the night was over she was given the last unction. Before the end came she whispered to her adopted daughter: "We shall meet again, we shall meet again," and she sealed this promise with a kiss.

M. Ampère and Paul David passed the night in a room adjoining. By midnight she called for them, and told them all goodbye in turn. M. l'Abbe de Cazales came to the library just as she was breathing her last. As her soul left this world she looked supremely beautiful. According to Mme. Lenormant, "Her face was supremely beautiful. It was stamped by an angelic sweetness; it looked like a beautiful piece of carved marble, none of her features were drawn, and never was the coming of the great sleep ever welcomed by more charm and grace. A drawing carved in stone by Achille Deviria shows this remarkable fact, shown with great fidelity."

She had known the charms and delights of old age as she had of youth, and she never tried to counterfeit them. Though her features were heavier and her waist had grown larger, she accepted these as inevitable with increasing years. To this she added more elegance, and made the smile that often concealed her tears even sweeter. She wore a cap which hid the grey hair; that beige hair had turned white while she was in Rome in 1824. Ampère was grieved greatly

when he realized, perhaps for the first time, he had lost his best friend. He admitted then for the first time that the affection she had bestowed on him had filled his whole life. Her old time friend, Prosper de Barante, spent his last years talking and writing about her and what she had meant to him. Many went to her salon out of curiosity and they stayed to ask for her friendship. Many a great man laid bare his mind and soul to her.

Flattered at times by these attentions she never played foolishly with a man's affection—this was shown about twice; once when Augustus of Prussia was in love with her and again when Benjamin Constant was madly in love with her. She knew that she was beautiful, but she never was made foolish by it. To beauty she contributed a good mind and a better soul. Her personality, so sweet and unusual, unfolded like a beautiful orchid. This lovely flower perfumed the air in which she breathed, and when it withered it faded in silence. The perfume of her soul had touched many souls, quickening them to fuller, nobler lives.

The English writer, Miss Trollope, who was invited to her salon while in Paris, remarked to Juliette that few romances ever had the honor of being illustrated by such a picture as that of *Madame de Stael* as *Corinne*, painted by Gerard, and that her pleasure in having it must be great.

"It is, indeed," Juliette replied. "Nor is it my only treasure of the kind. I am so fortunate as to possess Girodet's original drawing from *Atala*, the engraving which you must have seen often."

Discussing these days in which she reigned in her three small rooms at the Abbaye, Sainte Beuve in the *Causerie du Lundi* says: "M. de Chateaubriand was the pride of the place, but Mme. Recamier was the soul. In that shade where she lived at the Abbaye, she still kept the desire to conquer and her sweet skillfulness to gain hearts."

Let us say in one word her coquetry, but may orthodox doctors forgive me the word. It was an angelic coquetry. There are natures which are born pure, they go through the dark valley, they resist fire as those children of the holy scripture whom their good angel saved. Mme. Recamier, being young, needed that good angel, for the world in which she lived was mixed and she did not spare herself in braving it.











